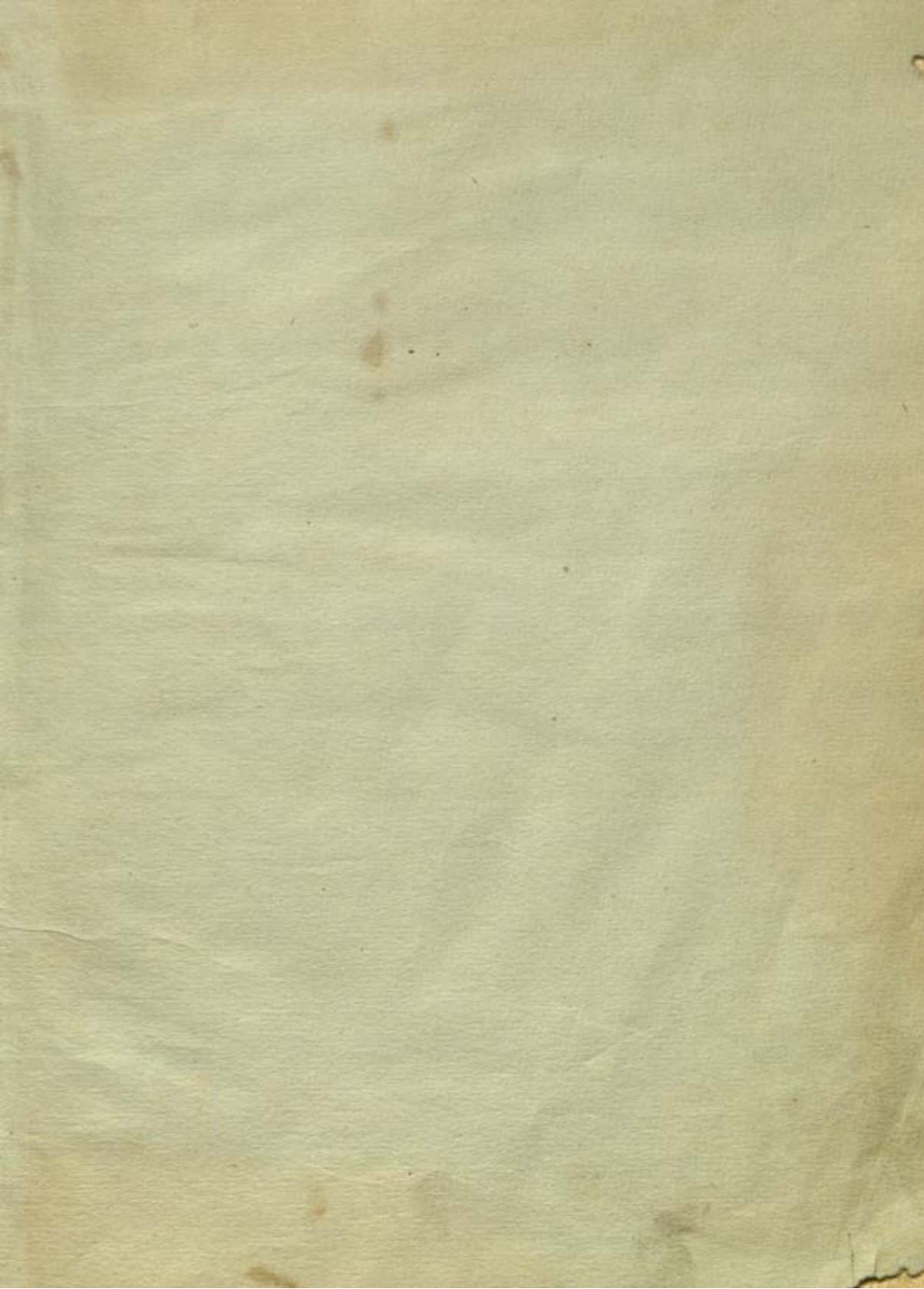


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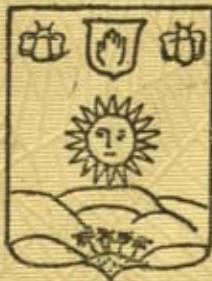
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Sanchi : a cultural study

by

M. K. Dhavalikar



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LOKASANGRAHA
An Annual Magazine of Archaeology

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FOREWORD

On the 15th of October 1964 the Deccan College celebrated the centenary of its main Building, and curiously enough this period coincides with the Silver Jubilee of the Postgraduate and Research Institute which, as successor to the Deccan College, started functioning from 17th August 1939 when members of the teaching faculty reported on duty. When I suggested to the members of our faculty the novel idea that the centenary should be celebrated by the publication of a hundred monographs representing the research carried on under the auspices of the Deccan College in its several departments they readily accepted the suggestion. These contributions are from present and past faculty members and research scholars of the Deccan College, giving a cross-section of the manifold research that it has sponsored during the past twentyfive years. From small beginnings in 1939 the Deccan College has now grown into a well developed and developing Research Institute and become a national centre in so far as Linguistics, Archaeology and Ancient Indian History and Anthropology and Sociology are concerned. Its international status is attested by the location of the Indian Institute of German Studies (jointly sponsored by Deccan College and the Goethe Institute of Munich), the American Institute of Indian Studies and a branch of the Ecole Francaise d'Extreme-Orient in the campus of the Deccan College. The century of monographs not only symbolises the centenary of the original building and the silver jubilee of the Research Institute, but also the new spirit of critical enquiry and the promise of more to come.

S. M. Katre

PREFACE

The study of the material culture of our ancient past as reflected in carvings and paintings is still in its infancy. Pioneering work, however, has been done in the subject by scholars like Sri Sivaramamurti, Dr. Moti Chandra, Dr. V. S. Agrawala and others. I myself studied the Ajanata paintings from this point of view. The present work can therefore be said to a further step in the field.

The subject was first suggested to me by Professor H. D. Sankalia, my revered *guru*. For this I am deeply beholden to him.

I am thankful to Dr. M. S. Mate for seeing the work through the press and to Dr. Mrs. S. Gokhale for going through the proofs. My friends, Sarvashri D. S. Chandrachud, Datta Kulkarni and R. B. Sapre prepared the illustrations. To them my thanks are due. I also gratefully acknowledge the help received from Sri A. Ghosh, the Director General Archaeology in India, New Delhi, who kindly supplied the photographs.

Lastly I am grateful to Rekha, my wife, for all her help.

16th May, 1965,
New Delhi:

M. K. Dhavalikar

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE	3
ARCHITECTURE	7
COSTUME	15
COIFFURE AND HEAD-DRESSES	28
PERSONAL ORNAMENTS	40
DOMESTIC VESSELS AND HOUSE-HOLD OBJECTS	48
FURNITURE	52
ARMS AND ARMOUR	55
MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS	61
CONVEYANCES	67
ROYAL INSIGNIA	72
EPILOGUE	74
INDEX	77

Introduction

It is customary to talk about Indian culture but so far as its material aspect is concerned we do not precisely know what it was. Our knowledge of the material culture of our ancient past is derived, to a great extent, from literary sources which, however, are too sketchy and in many cases we do not know as to what refers to what. The only reliable source, therefore, is the actual specimens that are found in the course of archaeological excavations at ancient sites. But there is hardly any ancient site worth the name, with the solitary exception of that at Taxila, which has been subjected to thorough and yet scientific excavation. In the circumstances, we have to depend solely on the plastic representations of our ancient cultural equipment. In this connection it would be no exaggeration to state that there is hardly any other monument in the country, save the wall paintings at Ajanta, like the great *stūpa* with its ornamental gateways at Sanchi, which depicts such an immense wealth of objects of daily use. These magnificent *toranas* are profusely sculptured with many scenes from the past lives of 'the Enlightened One' and in doing so the royal sculptors of the Satavahanas have portrayed the contemporary life in these dainty carvings. The reliefs thus constitute an illustrative documentary on the contemporary life and are therefore helpful in building up a vision of our vanished past in all its glory.¹

In the following pages, therefore, an attempt is made to study the entire wealth of the cultural equipment that is depicted in the reliefs, to compare the same with the actual specimens that have been found in the excavations of ancient sites, to note the plastic parallels, to substantiate it with the help of the accounts of foreigners and to corroborate the same by literary descriptions as far as possible.

(1) Right from the crude carvings and paintings of the Palaeolithic period upto the sophisticated art of our own days, art, throughout the history of the world has been reflecting the contemporary social life. This has been ably discussed by Arnold Hauser in his *Social History of Art*, 2 vols. (London, 1951).

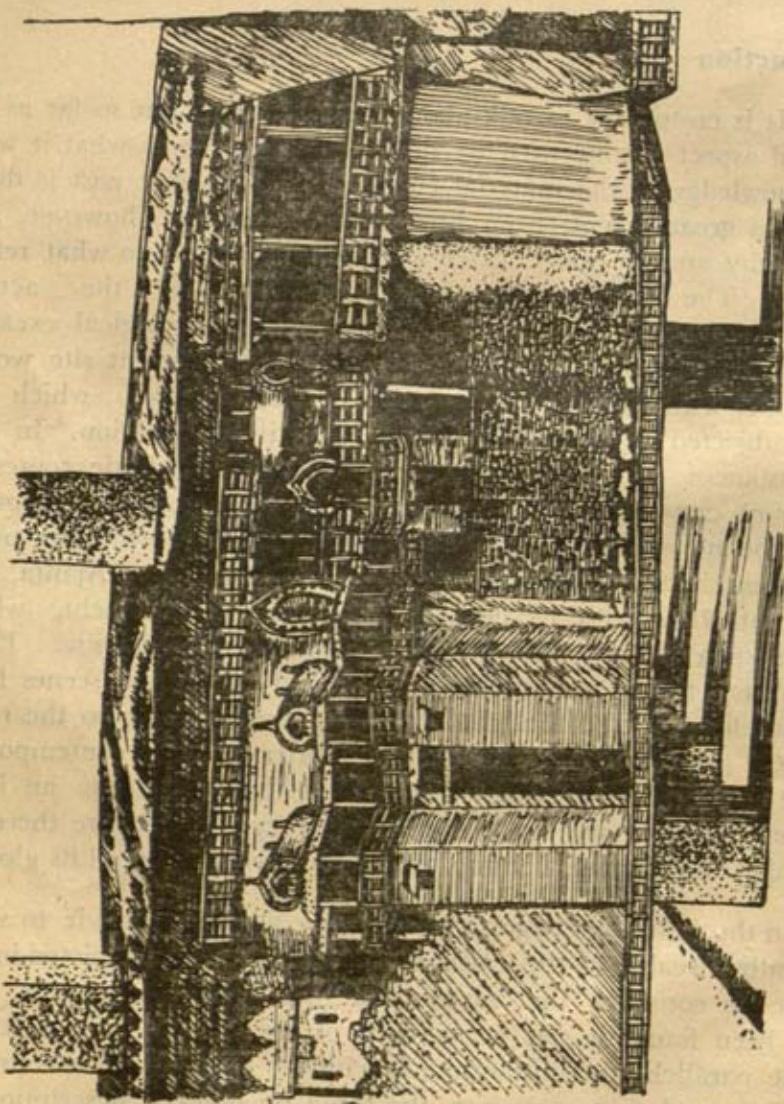


Fig. 1

Historical Perspective

The Buddhist *stupas* at Sanchi (District Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh) were rediscovered by Gen. Taylor in 1818 when they were in a remarkably good state of preservation. Since then they have attracted the attention of the scholarly world on account of their having tremendous wealth of figural and decorative carvings. They are, in MARSHALL's words, "the most imposing and the best preserved of all the monuments that early Buddhism has bequeathed to India¹". Apart from their artistic, religious and iconographic interest the early sculptures at Sanchi are "an almost inexhaustive mine of information in regard to contemporary civilization."²

The ancient name of Sanchi, as recorded in the early inscriptions at that place, was *Kākaṇāva* or *Kākaṇāya*³ which, under Chandragupta II became *Kākaṇādabōṭa*⁴ and still later in the 7th Cent. A. D. *Boṭa-Srīparvata*⁵ which has been identified by MAJUMDAR with the *Srīparvata* mentioned in Bhavabhuti's *Mālatī-Mādhava*.⁶

The *stūpa* at Sanchi is said to have existed even before Asoka the Great on the basis of a story in the *Mahāvāṃśa*⁷. However, it is believed to have been originally constructed by Asoka⁸. It was later said to have been mutilated by Pusyamitra Sunga⁹. The additions such as the balustrades and the *harmikā* were made during the Sunga regime. But the best additions to this remarkable *stūpa* were made under the Satavahana rule. These consist of the elaborate and richly carved gateways (*toraṇas*) in the four cardinal directions and are undoubtedly the crowning glory of the *stūpa*. In the chronological sequence they can be placed in the following order : Southern, Northern, Eastern and Western. However, all the *toraṇas* are almost similar to each other in their construction and design and differ only in their decorative details and it is probable that not more than two or three decades intervened between

(1) (Sir) John Marshall and Alfred Foucher, *The Monuments of Sanchi*, 1940, Vol. I, p. 1.

(2) *Ibid.*, p. ii.

(3) *Ibid.*, Inscription nos. 7, 17b, 394, 396 & 404.

(4) *Ibid.*, Inscription nos. 833 & 834.

(5) *Ibid.*, Inscription no. 842.

(6) *Ibid.*, p. 12.

(7) Geiger, p. 88 (Pali Text Society)

(8) Marshall and Foucher, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 18.

(9) *Ibid.*

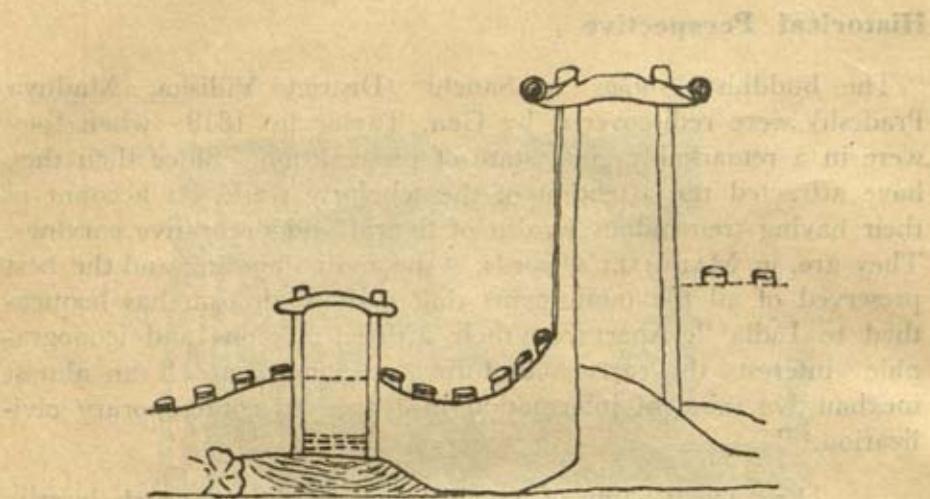


Fig. 2

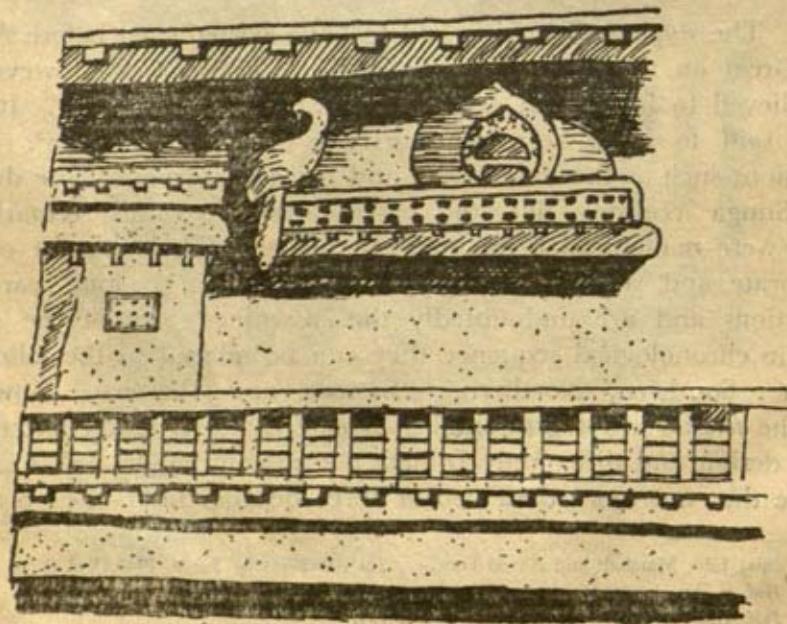


Fig. 3

the building of the four gateways¹, for the inscriptions engraved on them show that the right pillar of the Western Gateway was donated by the same person as the middle architrave of the Southern Gateway, viz. "by Balamitra, the pupil of Arya-chuḍa" and the south pillar of the Eastern Gateway and the north pillar of the Western Gateway were also the gifts of the same donor, viz. Nāgapiya, a banker of Achavada, the native of Kukara.²

The best preserved of them all is the Northern Gateway. Each gateway was composed of two square pillars surmounted by capitals which, in their turn, were crowned by a superstructure of three architraves with volute ends. These pillars and the architraves have been profusely adorned with carved reliefs. Among them the important from the point of view of the present study are the scenes depicting some of the former lives of the Buddha as they are helpful in building up a picture of the contemporary life.

As regards the period of the gateways we have to depend on inscriptional evidence. On the Southern Gateway is carved a donative inscription³ which records the gift of one of its architraves by a certain Ānanda, an architect of the Satavahana king Sri Satakarni who has been identified with Satakarni II who was reigning about the middle of 1st Cent. B. C. As already noted, no more than two or three decades intervened between the earliest and the last gateways. They can therefore be dated to about 50 to 20 B. C. Thus it is the work of a generation or so. This is all the more important from the point of view of our study as it can be said with reasonable amount of certitude that the life depicted in the reliefs is of a generation which lived during the third quarter of the 1st Cent. B. C. It also helps us to study the tastes and fashions of a particular generation. This point can only be realized when we take into consideration the fact that there is no other similar edifice in the country which can be precisely dated to an approximate decade as our chronology is based generally in centuries. Thus we are on surer chronological grounds so far as the *toranas* of Sanchi are concerned.

(1) Marshall has discussed at length the comparative chronology of the four gateways. See *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 36 ff.

(2) *Ibid.*, P. 37.

(3) Marshall and Foucher, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 177.

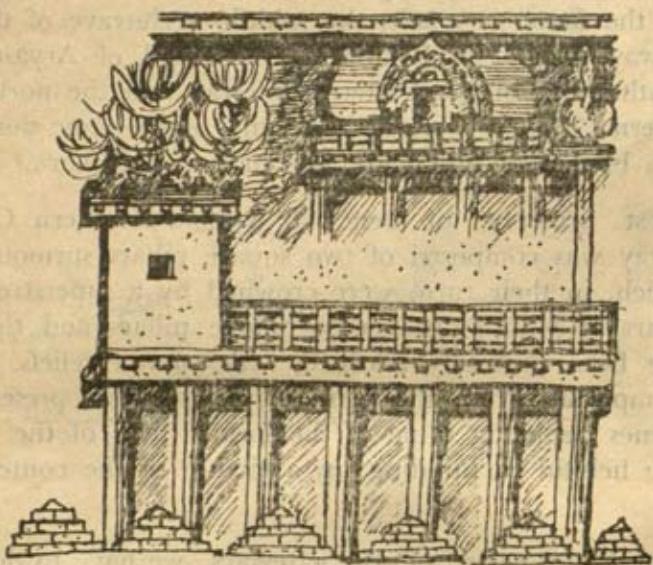


Fig. 4

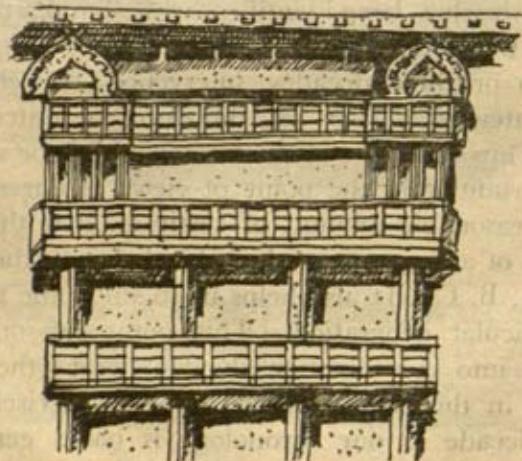


Fig. 5

This particular period, that is the third quarter of the 1st Cent. B. C., when the emperor Satakarni II of the Satavahana dynasty was ruling over a major part of the country in the Deccan and Central India, was a formative period in the history of India. The powerful Satavahana monarch had then consolidated his position and was the only supreme ruler who had no rivals to that claim. The foreign rulers whose inroads in the country had disturbed the social life of the people were relegated to subsidiary positions. It was a period of considerable political peace, which, coupled with economic prosperity, inspired the artistic genius of the people and it is only such an era of affluence which makes it possible to create such architectural edifices like the one at Sanchi. The Sanchi reliefs therefore afford us a glimpse of life of the affluent generation which lived during the third quarter of 1st Cent. B. C.¹

Architecture

The immensely large number of temples and monastic establishments that have survived in the course of centuries no doubt conveys us a fairly good idea of the religious architecture of our ancient past. But unfortunately our knowledge of our ancient religious architecture is not matched by that of secular architecture. Literary references to the latter are too many to detail, but we do not have actual remains to compare them with literary descriptions. Mention must, however, be made of the architectural remains that have been brought to light in the course of such large-scale excavations as those at Taxila. But many more sites should be excavated so that we can have sufficient data at our disposal to formulate a clear idea of our ancient secular architecture. This is all the more necessary in order to corroborate it by literary references and descriptions of foreigners.

The Sanchi reliefs contain a good number of representations of a variety of dwellings ranging from royal palaces to humble huts and religious establishments as well and herein we can study a variety of details of the architectural creations of the ancient Indian artisan.

(1) The life depicted in the reliefs cannot strictly be taken to be of the people of Central India for the simple reason that the artists, while executing the reliefs, must have been guided by certain conventions and traditions as well.

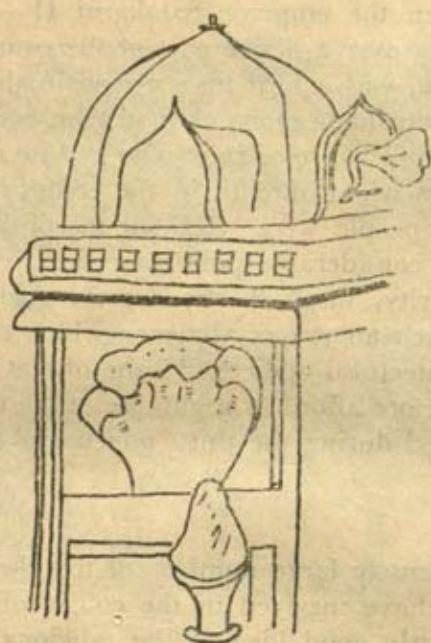


Fig. 6

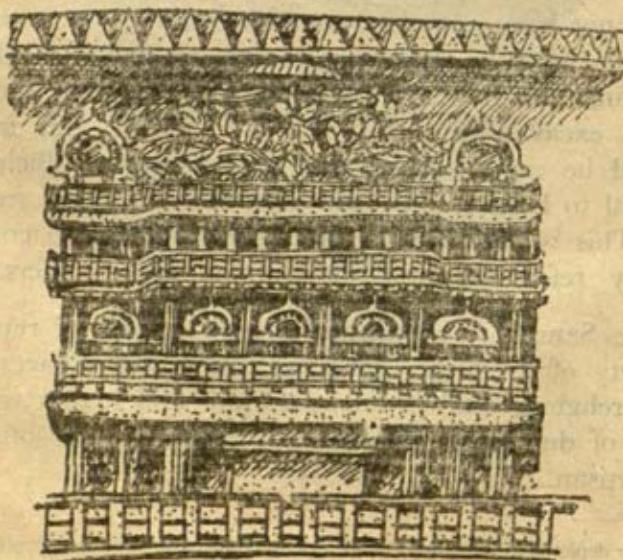


Fig. 7

FORTIFICATIONS

MOAT

A study of the reliefs shows that an ancient Indian city was invariably provided with a tall rampart which, as the literary evidence shows, ran all around the city. Along the rampart (*prākāra*) was a deep moat (*parikhā*), full of water, in which full-blown lotuses and other aquatic plants grew. In the rampart, gateways along-with towers were provided. Possibly there were four such gateways in cardinal directions and within the rampart was enclosed the city.

In the panel showing "The War of Relics" the city of Kusinara is represented (Fig. 1). It shows a besieged town. By the side of the rampart wall is a moat or ditch in which is seen a line of lotuses in the middle of the foreground, marking the moat in which some soldiers are seen standing. In another panel¹ women from the city are shown going down to the moat to fetch water and there is access on the city side through a little gate.

Moat is usually referred to as *parikhā* and the *Milindapanha* informs us that architects, after planning the town, started their work with the moat.²

RAMPART WALLS

Behind the moat and along with it runs the rampart wall which was probably of stone or brick masonry (Fig. 1). In the panel showing "the War of Relics" on the Southern Gateway it is constructed of large-sized bricks or dressed stones and is shown with reentrant angles. In some other panels, rampart walls with stepped merlons or battlements³ are also depicted. Sometimes it is finished off at the top by coping.⁴

Yet the most interesting rampart occurs in a relief which depicts what is evidently a wooden wall of palisade construction

(1) Pl. XL (The references to plates are all from Marshall and Foucher, *The Monuments at Sanchi*, Vol. II).

(2) I, 34.

(3) Pl. XXXI.

(4) Pl. XV.

(Fig. 2). COOMARASWAMY rightly infers that it is a mud-wall reinforced by a wooden palisade similar to that at Pataliputra¹.

It would therefore not be wrong to say that it is only the Sanchi reliefs that offer us such an interesting variety of ancient rampart walls. Almost every city that is represented in the reliefs is shown with a rampart wall. This would show the importance of rampart walls in ancient town planning. It was in fact a necessity from the point of view of defence. They continued to be the chief feature of Indian cities till very lately and their remains can still be seen in many of the towns of historical importance in the country.

Rampart walls have been found at many excavated sites and it appears from their remains that they were considerably broad and high, sometimes more than 15 metres, as is evidenced by those at Koshambi². They were constructed mostly of burnt bricks which, however, could be taken as a local feature at many sites since the governing factor was the availability of raw materials.

TOWER

Again in the same panel (Fig. 1) we find, to the left of the city gate, an octagonal tower which is unique on account of its being the only representation of its kind. The tower is quite high, about 10 metres, and is provided, from outside, with a flight of steps for going up. Rectangular windows are also seen in its walls. The whole structure is crowned by huge, stepped merlons and some soldiers are seen standing on it for defending the city. It should be noted that the method of defence consisted not only in shooting arrows but also of throwing down huge blocks of stone and boulders from the tower on the assailants. A *Jātaka* story relates vividly "when they were in moat, attempting to destroy the wall, the men in the tower (*antarāttālesu*) dealt havoc with arrows, javelins, spears, and so forth."³

A defence tower is referred to as *atṭāla* or *atṭālaka* and a *Jātaka* story mentions such a one either within or near, but not upon the rampart⁴ which is very well borne out by the representation at Sanchi.

(1) Early Indian Architecture-I-Cities and City Gates etc.," *Eastern Art*, Vol. II, 1930, p. 213

(2) G. R. Sharma, *Koshambi*, pp. 27 ff, Pl. 14. (Allahabad, 1960).

(3) VI, 400. (ed. by E. B. Cowell and others, Cambridge, 1895)

(4) II, 40.

CITY GATE

In the same panel is seen in the centre a huge, impressive gateway (Fig. 1) which is also being defended by soldiers. It is an imposing structure with projecting balconies at the top having a vaulted roof. The projecting sides of the roof are carved with *chaitya* arches. In the balcony are seen some persons, possibly soldiers.

In the centre of the gateway or gate-house (*dvārakoṣṭhaka*) is the entrance doorway which must have been provided with a pair of door-leaves (*kavata*). The entrance is guarded by soldiers; on its either side are two pilasters of the gate-house. They have been provided with small windows, or rather apertures, with awnings which can also be distinctly made out in the panel. COOMARASWAMY rightly observes that these openings served the double purpose of lighting the stairway inside and of a post for archers.¹

Again in the same panel should be noticed another gateway on the extreme right which is shown guarded by soldiers (Fig. 1). Above the entrance is a gate-house with probably a flat roof having battlements. The gate-house with projecting balconies and vaulted roof is by far the commonest at Sanchi and elsewhere as well in early Indian art. But the one with flat roof is of rare occurrence and hence its importance.

The representations of two gateways in close proximity to each other show that a big city was provided with more than four gateways as was usually the case. And Megashthenes tells us that Pataliputra, the imperial capital of the Mauryas, had sixty-four gates.²

Another noteworthy feature of the rampart and the gateway depicted in "The War of Relics" scene (Fig. 1) is that the brick or stone masonry of the rampart wall is clearly visible in the relief while the other structures i. e. the gateways and the tower have a smooth surface which is indicative of their being coated with stucco.

(1) *op. cit.*, Hatus Vol. II, p. 215.

(2) R. C. Majumdar, *Classical Accounts of India*, p. 224.

PALACES

Of all the architectural illustrations in the Sanchi reliefs those of palaces are very few and it is therefore difficult to build up a picture of a palace of those days. What we have is not a complete illustration of a palace but a few glimpses of royal dwellings.

It should, however, be noted that the palaces shown in the reliefs in no way differ in their grandeur and majesty from the elaborate mansions of the men of means in the city. The former might only be a complex of a number of structures of two or more storeys. Thus a palace depicted on the Southern Gateway¹ has a pillared ground floor which is considerably spacious. The first floor has a roomy balcony having a high berm railing. The top floor probably has a vaulted roof in which is set a huge *chaitya* window.

The palace in the "Conception"² scene is a two-storeyed structure (Fig. 3). Its ground floor, however, is not seen completely. In the balcony on the upper floor is shown the queen Māyā fast asleep and on the extreme left is a chamber having a latticed window (*jāla-vātāpāna*). It has a flat roof adorned by pyramidal merlons along the margin. The roll moulding running on all sides of the chamber is supported by brackets springing from the walls.

The second floor too has a balcony with berm railing and on the roof, having a projecting *chaitya* window, is seen a peacock perching.

A palace depicted on the Western Gateway is possibly a two-storeyed structure.³ Its ground floor is not seen. The upper floor has a balcony with berm railing; the top floor too has a similar yet smaller balcony, but has a big *chaitya* window.

HOUSES

There are a few excellent illustrations of houses. However, all the representations provide us with only the front of the houses and nowhere can we see the interior of a house. Yet we come

(1) Pl. XII.

(2) Pl. L (a).

(3) Pl. LXIII.

across a variety of dwellings ranging from humble huts to sumptuous multi-storeyed mansions which help us a long way in filling in flesh in the mere skeletal plans of dwellings that have so far been brought to light in the course of excavations at ancient sites.

From the illustrations it appears that a majority of the houses had two or more storeys (*tāla*), more particularly those along the rampart wall and city gates. The ground floor seems to be a pillared hall; the upper floor is invariably shown as having spacious balconies. The only house (Fig. 4) of which an unobstructed view is obtained is situated behind the city walls.¹ Its ground floor is a pillared hall, the pillars being octagonal. It has an overhanging eave. The first floor has a spacious balcony having a berm railing and some rooms. The pillars of the first floor are also octagonal and have brackets at the top supporting the eave above. The second floor probably has a vaulted roof and also has a huge *chaitya* window. It has a small balcony with berm railing.

The most noteworthy feature of this structure is that it has a room on the extreme left. This room is provided with a window on the side facing and is flat-roofed. The pyramidal merlons along the margin of the roof add to the beauty of the room. The room does not appear to have been meant for residential purposes but seems to be a shrine, rather private. A very similar room is seen in the "Conception" scene (Fig. 3). What is interesting is that a shrine depicted in one of the reliefs has similar pyramidal merlons on its roof.

Another three-storeyed house² (Fig. 5) also has a pillared ground floor, a balconied first floor while the second floor has small pillared porticoes on either side with some open space in between. The top floor has large *chaitya* windows, just above the porticoes on the second floor. At the back, on the top floor, are some sets of rooms, having a vaulted roof crowned by pinnacles.

HUTS

People in villages lived in humble huts of which the best illustrations occur in the panel showing the village of Uruvela (Pl. VI). They have vaulted roofs crowned by pinnacles.

(1) Pl. XXXIV, 6.

(2) Pl. LI (b).

Monks and anchorites dwelt in huts having a domical roof made of tree leaves which justify their appellation *parṇasālā*.

RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE

There are several illustrations of religious structures which are interesting on account of their variety. It should, however, be noted that the image of the Buddha nowhere occurs for the simple reason that the religious establishments at Sanchi belonged to the Hinayāna sect and the Buddha image was yet to be fashioned.

The simplest shrine¹ is that of the *Bodhi* tree (*bodhi-ghara*) enclosed within four compact walls, and the entrance is provided through a gateway, very similar in conception to the Sanchi *toraṇas*, but has only a single, curved cross-bar with volute ends.

In another panel² is represented a stupa, either of stone or brick masonry, and enclosed within railing on four sides.

Yet another shrine³ contains the *dharmachakra* crowned by a *chhatra*. The structure is supported by massive octagonal pillars with bell-shaped capitals which, in turn, are crowned by animal-riders reminding one of those at Karla⁴. The roof is flat and has pyramidal merlons along the margin which bespeak of the borrowing of this motif from the Persians.

Another *bodhi-ghara* is an imposing structure⁵ (Pl. I) which, according to COOMARASWAMY, is circular on plan.⁶ The octagonal pillars have *ghaṭa* bases alternately and are not far removed from those in Cave X at Nasik⁷. The gallery chamber has possibly twelve arched windows, arranged in the groups of three. The temple is open to sky and enshrines a *bodhi* tree in the centre, adorned with streamers and topped with a double-garlanded umbrella. The roof is crowned by pinnacles.

A very interesting type of *bodhi-ghara* (Pl. II) is octagonal on plan and is crowned by huge, arched windows.⁸ An over-

(1) Pl. XXIX.

(2) Pl. LI (a).

(3) Pl. XXVI.

(4) Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu Periods)*, Pl. XX, Fig. 2. (Bombay, 1942).

(5) Pl. XVIII.

(6) *op. cit.*, *Eastern Art* Vol. II, p. 233.

(7) Brown, *op. cit.*, pl. XXII—A, Fig. 2.

(8) Pl. L(a).

hanging eave runs round the whole structure and is supported by the brackets of the pillars which are octagonal. Within the structure a *tri-ratna* is installed on a pedestal while a huge *bodhi* tree stands in the centre thus pointing to the shrine being open to the sky.

A *bodhi-ghara*, very similar to the preceding one but having a domical roof crowned by pinnacles, occurs in another panel¹ (Fig. 6); a seven-hooded *nāga* image is enshrined in the structure. The shrine recalls to the mind a similar but quadrangular terracotta structure of the Satavahana period recovered from Nevasa.²

The most elaborate *bodhi-ghara*³ in the reliefs is a three-storeyed structure (Fig. 7) which COOMARASWAMY thinks to be apsidal on plan⁴. The ground floor has massive hexagonal pillars, six of which are clearly seen. The first floor has a row of beautiful *chaitya* windows while the second floor appears to be only a severely plain pillared hall with a balcony in the front having berm railing. The uppermost gallery chamber has a huge *chaitya* window at each end and in the centre is a great *bodhi* tree.

Costume

Costume is the cardinal necessity of civilization and its invention is a landmark in the man's march from barbarism towards civilization. Costume has a long history in India stretching back to the third millennium B. C. when the Harappans used cotton clothing. This is confirmed by the find of a few scraps of cotton cloth found sticking to a silver vase at Mohenjodaro.⁵ On expert examination it has been found to resemble the present day coarse Indian cotton with its convoluted structure. This points to India being the original home of cotton and also supports the contention that the fabric called *Sindhu* in Babylonian and *Sindon* in Greek was made of cotton⁶.

In the later period the *Vedas* present before us a well-dressed Indian⁷ while in the literature of the later period references to cotton and items of clothing are too many to detail.

(1) Pl. LXI.

(2) *Indian Archaeology, A Review*, 1960-61, p. 21, Pl. XXXII, B.

(3) Pl. LXI

(4) *op. cit.*, *Eastern Art*, Vol. II, 1930, p. 233.

(5) John Marshall, *Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilization*, Vol. I, p. 33. London, 1931.)

(6) *Ibid.*

(7) A. A. Macdonell & A. B. Keith, *Tedic Index*, Vol. II, pp. 291-92 (Delhi, 1958).

Fig. 9



Fig. 8



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



The variety of different items of clothing depicted in the Sanchi reliefs is indeed interesting. It should, however, be mentioned at the outset that there is not much difference between the costume of the royalty and nobility and that of the commoners. The difference may probably be in the quality of the cloth used by them. As is usually the case those belonging to the higher strata of society must have used finer fabrics while the commoners had to be contented with coarser and simpler varieties.

The various articles of clothing and different modes of wearing them are described below.

MEN

The commonest lower garment (*antariya*) used by men is *dhoti*. It is a short *dhoti* reaching the knees only and leaving the lower extremities of legs uncovered (Fig. 8). One of the ends of the *dhoti* was usually gathered into pleats, tucked in at the front while the lower ends of the one side were carried at the back in pleats and tucked in. In a word the *kachchha* was in vogue. Even today the *dhoti* is worn in the very same fashion in Maharashtra.

The *dhoti* was secured on the waist by a broad *kamarband*, sometimes tied loosely in a looped knot at the front while a long tuft was left loosely dangling between the legs or held in the hand.

The short *dhoti* can be identified as the *ardhoruka*¹ which is frequently referred to in literature and is characteristic of the early period as is evident from its representations at Amaravati² and Nagarjunakonda³.

A most noteworthy feature of the *ardhoruka*, which was worn by men of all classes, is that it reaches down below the knees in case of men belonging to royalty and nobility while in the case of men of the lower classes it ends just above the knees (Fig. 9).

Another⁴ interesting mode of wearing the lower garment is seen in a panel showing a *yakṣa* who is shown wearing a long *antariya*

(1) *Urdhvārdha-chchha-dakar-arthukam-ardhorukam*, Amara, p. 158 Ed. by H. D. Sharma & N. G. Sardesai, Poona, 1941)

(2) G. Sivaramamurti, *Amaravati Sculptures in the Madras Government Museum*, pl. XVIII, 1. (Madras)

(3) A. V. Naik, "Studies in the Nagarjunakonda Sculptures," *BDCRI*, Vol. II, 1940, Fig. 6 & 8.

(4) Pl. LXVI, a

Fig. 12



Fig. 16



Fig. 13



Fig. 14



Fig. 15

reaching down below the knees (Fig. 10). It appears to have been simply wound round the waist and one of its ends at the front is held in the left hand and the long, flowing tuft is left loosely hanging down. There might however be a *kachchha* at the back. This particular mode of wearing a *dhoti* marks a noteworthy change from the one already mentioned in which the pleats were tucked in at the front. In this connection it should be noted that the former fashion of wearing *dhoti* i. e. simply winding it around the loins and leaving long, flowing tufts loosely dangling becomes very common later in the Gupta period and its innumerable illustrations can be seen in the later group of Ajanta paintings. What is interesting to note is that this style had already made its advent four centuries earlier as its representations at Sanchi would show. However, it took considerably long time to become common. This is as it should be; for, we know that even today the people in India are averse to adopt new styles and assimilate them in the pattern of life.

The varieties of *ardhoruka* mentioned above were used by kings and commoners alike but the men from forests such as hunters and tribal people are shown wearing a somewhat different lower garment which is simply wound round the loins and it possibly has a *kachchha* at the back (Fig. 11). Moreover it is very short, ending well above the knees.

The ascetics are shown wearing a lower garment (Fig. 12) which from its schematic, rib-like folds, appears to be bark of tree while, at the same time, the possibility of its being made of grass can also not be ruled out. Garments made of bark of trees or grass have a high antiquity in India. Thus, though cotton clothing was known in the Vedic period, the wife of a sacrificer is described as putting on a garment of the *kuśa* grass¹. The Buddhist texts too refer to garments of grass, bark and tree leaves (*phalaka*) while in the *Rāmāyaṇa* Rama, Sita and Lakṣmana are described as wearing *valkalas* i. e. the bark dress during their exile. This shows that it was a dress to be used in jungles and forests. It would therefore not be wrong to presume that the dress of the hunters and ascetics in the reliefs was made of bark of trees or leaves.

Upper garment (utteriya)

The upper garment was usually a single piece of cloth, of considerable length. However, it is not a very common garment,

(1) A. C. Das, *Rigvedic Culture*, p. 211 (Calcutta, 1925).

Fig. 17



Fig. 18



Fig. 19



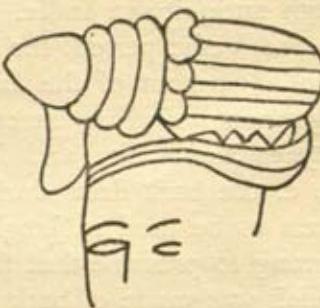
Fig. 20



Fig. 21



Fig. 22



the reason being that it is only shown used by princes and noblemen while common man is not shown using it at all.

The *uttariya* is seen resting over the neck and is passed through the right arm and is sometimes so long that both its ends reach the ground (Fig. 9).

Foreigners

Most of the animal riders depicted in the reliefs can be taken, with reasonable amount of certainty, to be foreigners on account of their dress which is altogether different from that already described. Their costume is extremely interesting.

Two animal riders on the Northern Gateway¹ are shown wearing tight-fitting, full-sleeved coats. The coat of the rider on the left is round-necked while that of the other is 'V' shaped and the both have a middle opening. Their lower garment is not seen distinctly.

The full-sleeved coat is essentially a Central Asian garment which was worn by Scythians from a very early period before the opening of the Christian era. A painted vase from Olympia in Greece, datable to 6th Cent. B. C., depicts two Scythians wearing such coats². In India too it possibly came with the Kushans. But it appears to have come in vogue during the Kushana period only. Some of the Kushana kings, also of Central Asian origin, who have been sculptured in the Mathura art have been shown wearing such coats³. But they become an article of common use only in the Gupta period and we find that some of the Gupta monarchs are shown clad in such coats on their coins⁴.

This long coat, according to DR.AGRAVALA, is the *chīna-cholaka* type of garment⁵. A very similar but rather loose tunic was used by the Mogul princes who again were of Central Asian origin. The latter was known as *chogā*⁶, an appellation probably derived from

(1) Pl. XIX.

(2) W. M. McGovern, *Early Empires of Central Asia*, Pl. facing p. 36. (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1939).

(3) J. Ph. Vogel, *La Sculpture de Mathura*, Pls. I, II & III. (Bruxelles, 1930).

(4) A. S. Altekar, *Coinage of the Gupta Empire*, Pl. I, 14-15. (Benaras, 1957).

(5) Such a coat has been found in Central Asia. See his "Clothes in *Harsacharita*," (in Hindi), *Npp*, Vol. 57, 1952-53, p. 325.

(6) Excellent specimens of *chogā* are on display in the Red Fort Museum, Delhi.

Fig.
23Fig.
24Fig.
25Fig.
26Fig.
27Fig.
28

its prototype, *chīna-cholaka*. In the light of evidence cited it would not be wrong to identify the riders as Scythians.

Another animal rider¹ (Fig. 13) wears a tight-fitting, half-sleeved tunic. From the very nature of its sleeves, which ended above the elbows, the garment can be identified as *kūrpāsaka* which, according to DR. AGRAVALA, is of Central Asian origin². The garment does not appear to have taken much time to be adopted by the Indians as some men in the earlier group of paintings at Ajanta are shown wearing it³. It however becomes very common during the Gupta period and still continues to be worn by villagers in Maharashtra where it is known as *kopari*⁴ (in Marathi), a name which has obviously been derived from the Sanskrit *kūrpāsaka*.

The rider, who is wearing a *kūrpāsaka*, is also seen wearing long, tight-fitting trousers. These are in all probability of the *svasthāna* type⁵. This particular garment is also said to be of Central Asian origin. "By reason of their domestication of horses and adoption of horse-back riding," says McGOVERN, "the inhabitants of Central Asia were forced to discard the loose skirt costume. For centuries, wearing of trousers was confined exclusively to the inhabitants of Central Asia and this custom spread to all parts of the globe."⁶"

This type of trousers, referred to as *somstamni*⁷ in the Niya documents from Central Asia⁸, can be identified as the *svasthāna*⁹. There should therefore be little doubt regarding their introduction in India by the Sakas. Further, it is needless to say that the rider wearing a *kūrpāsaka* and *svasthāna* is a Saka.

A goat-rider wears a very curious costume¹⁰ (Fig. 14). His lower garment appears to be a short skirt, ending above the knees while the upper garment is a long and considerably broad piece of cloth which he is wearing in the fashion in which a Roman donned

(1) Pl. LXVI.

(2) *op. cit.*, NPP, Vol. 57, p. 326.

(3) G. Yazdani, *Ajanta*, Pt. III, Pl. XXX. (Oxford, 1946)

(4) *Ibid.*, p. 320.

(5) *op. cit.*, p. 2.

(6) R. C. Agrawala, "A study of the Textiles and Garments as depicted in the Kharoshthi Documents from Chinese Turkistan," *BV*, Vol. XIV, 1953, p. 89.

(7) Agrawala, *op. cit.*, NPP, Vol. 57, p. 320.

(8) Pl. XLVIII.

Fig. 29



Fig. 30



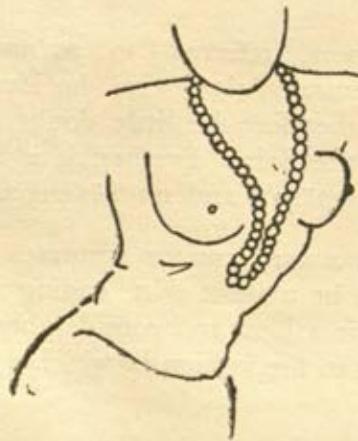
Fig. 31



Fig. 32



Fig. 33



his *toga*. His dress resembles that of a Roman soldier and he can therefore be taken to be a Roman.

Amongst the foreigners the most interesting costume is worn by the musicians in an orchestra¹ (Pl. VIII). They all wear tight-fitting trousers of the *svasthāna* type and a long, loose coat of the *chīna-cholaka* variety. Over the coat they wear a cloak which is secured on the neck at the front by means of a round clasp. The cloak is seen falling loosely on the back. It has been identified by DR. AGRAVALA as *āchchhādanaka* which is referred to in the *Harṣacharita*².

The representations of foreigners such as the Sakas and Romans is not surprising. It is well known that the Central Asians, more particularly the Sakas, had come to India even before the opening of the Christian era in large hordes and settled in the north-western regions of the country where they also carved out their own principalities. As regards the Romans, it is now an established fact that India enjoyed a flourishing trade with the Imperial Rome about the beginning of the Christian era. This trade received tremendous impetus during Augustus' regime which was almost contemporaneous with the execution of our reliefs. Further, the classical writers record the visits of Roman merchants to India and their settlements in the country as well³. This would explain the representation of a Roman at Sanchi⁴.

WOMEN

In utter contrast with the costume of men there is absolutely no variety in the dress of women. They are usually shown wearing an *ardhoruka* reaching the knees. It is wound round the loins and the tuft is left loosely hanging. The *ardhoruka* is sometimes made of very thin material (*magnāṁśuka*) (Pl. III).

The mode of wearing the *ardhoruka* is not very different from that of the *dhotī* of men. However, women do not seem to collect the front pleats and tuck in as is done by men. But they do have a *kachchhā* at the back (Pl. IV).

(1) Pl. XXXVI,C

(2) *op. cit.*, NPP, Vol. 57, p. 328.

(3) K. A. Nilakantha Sastri (Ed), *The Mauryas and the Satavahanas*, p. 440 Bombay, 1957

(4) A *Tavana* couple is sculptured on a pilaster at Pitalkhora. See M. N. Deshpande "The Rock-cut Caves of Pitalkhora in the Deccan," AI, No. 15, 1959, p. 85, Pl. LX, B.

Fig. 35

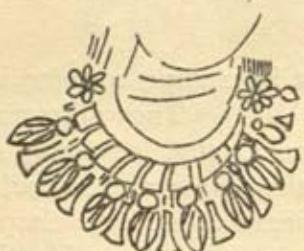


Fig. 36

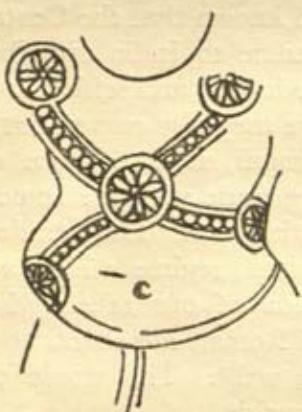


Fig. 37

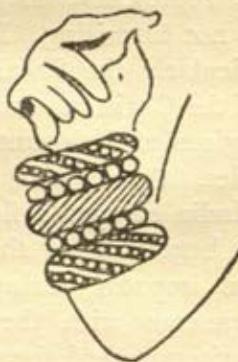


Fig. 38

The lower garment is sometimes longish and reached the ankles (Fig. 15). However, the tufts are left dangling on the sides. The *antariya*, whether short or long, is usually secured on the waist by an elaborate *mekhalā* (Pl. IV).

From the representations it appears that there was a change in the mode of wearing the lower garment among women during the latter half of 1st Cent. B.C. In the earlier period, women usually gathered the front pleats of their *antariya* and tucked them in and also wore a *kachchhā* at the back. The women of the Satavahana period, however, appear to have brought in vogue a new style of wearing the *antariya* which is seen in the Sanchi reliefs, and which continued and became very common during the Gupta-Vakataka period as can be surmised from their innumerable illustrations in the later group of paintings at Ajanta.

FOOTWEAR

So far as footwear is concerned, almost all the foreigners are shown wearing shoes of some kind or the other. Of the Indians, it appears to be a privilege of princes only and it is only in the *Viśvantara Jātaka* (Northern Gateway)¹ that we come across a clear illustration of a sandal worn by a king (Fig. 16). It is a simple sandal of two straps joined at the point between first and second toe and is similar to the modern one. This appears to be a true Indian type which is also seen in the early paintings at Ajanta wherein a king is seen wearing it.²

As already noted the foreigners are almost invariably shown wearing some sort of shoes which, in many cases, are indistinct. Their best illustration is seen in the panel showing the band of foreign musicians (Pl. VIII). They all wear what looks like top boots with braces fastened all around and up to the ankles. Such boots have been referred to as *kaphs* (Persian) from which the Sanskrit name *kaphphusa* has been derived³. It should be noted that such top boots, but without fastenings, became common in India during the Gupta-Vakataka period⁴. In the light of evidence from Sanchi, we can ascribe the introduction of these boots in India to Iranians. This observation can further be supported by a story in the *Mahābhārata* wherein we are told as to how shoes, made of (animal) skin were first presented to the sage Jamadagni along with umbrella by the Sun God in the guise of an old brahmin as protective devices against the burning rays of the Sun⁵. This story probably contains a substratum of historical truth, for we know that Surya, who is always shown with top boots in early Indian art, is said to be Iranian in origin so far as his iconographical elements are concerned. The boots may therefore be said to be Iranian in origin.

Nor is this all. The problem is further complicated by a reference to a variety of boots—*anupadīna*—by Pāṇini. MITRA has very correctly explained it as *anupadam vyāpnōti anupadīna*, thus imply-

(1) Pl. XXLX

(2) Yazdani, *op. cit.*, pt. III, Pl. XXX, c.

(3) See Moti Chandra, *Bharatīya Vēstabhūta*, p. 117.
(Prayag, V. S. 2007).

(4) Yazdani, *op. cit.*, pt. II, Pl.

(5) *Anuśasanaparvan*, Ch. 95-96. See J. N. Banerjea, "Myths explaining some traits of the North Indian Sun Icons," *IHQ*, Vol. XXVIII, 1952, p.3.

ing an outer covering for foot. But this need not lead us to doubt the foreign origin of the top boots for we find that the Scythians were using them as early as 6th Cent. B. C.¹. We can therefore safely credit the horse-loving Central Asians with the invention of top boots and it were the Sakas, a Central Asian tribe, who probably introduced them in Iran as well. It might just be possible that the type was in vogue in north-west frontier regions of India which was the meeting place of the westerners and the Indians and where Panini lived.

Fig. 39



Fig. 40

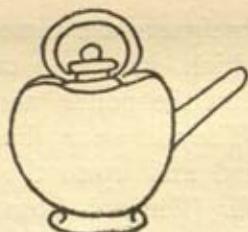


Fig. 41

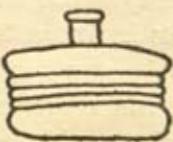
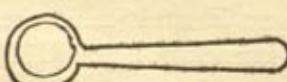


Fig. 42



Fig. 43

Coiffure and Headdresses

In no other country except possibly Japan has the art of coiffure reached such a high degree of excellence as it did in India in ancient times. This is amply borne out by the representations of coiffure in early Indian art, more particularly in the wall paintings of Ajanta. It, however, is true only of the Gupta-Vakataka period, the Golden Age in Indian history. In the earlier period the hairdoes were rather simple in character and conception as is testified by the Sanchi reliefs. *Men*: A study of the coiffures depicted in the reliefs shows that, during the latter half of the first Cent. B. C., men did not bestow any care on their hair. This was, in

(1) McGovern, *op. cit.*, Pl. facing p. 36.

the main, due to the common practice of wearing turbans. In the reliefs only a few men are shown without turbans and therefore not much can be said about the male coiffure.

Among men, generally the ascetics, genii etc. are shown without turbans or any other headdress. Genii or the dwarfs especially have extremely curly hair. Some of them have fastened a fillet to their hair and the same is tied at the back in a looped knot while the ends are left loosely fluttering at the back. (Fig. 17).

It would be interesting to know that curly hair are conspicuously absent in early Indian art; they make their appearance only during the Kushana period when we find that the images of the Buddha are depicted with such curly hair. They however become extremely common during the Gupta period. In this connection it should be noted that such curly hair was a raging fashion in the Hellenistic and the Roman world. Taking into consideration India's intimate contacts with the Greeks and the Romans it would not be wrong to infer that the fashion was introduced into India by the Graeco-Romans just before the Christian era. And now it can be said that the same became common during the Gupta-Vakataka period even though it had its beginnings in the Satavahana period.

The forehead band, too, is similarly absent in early Indian art. It also becomes fairly common only in the Gupta period. However, it must be mentioned here that the same was in vogue in India at a very early date for the famous Harappan priest is shown wearing such a band with a gem in the centre¹. Yet it is not to be found either in the Vedic or in the Maurayan or the Surga periods. This shows that it was obviously forgotten during the intervening period. Its presence at Sanchi is therefore intriguing. In this connection it needs a special mention that such forehead bands have a high antiquity in the classical world. The ancient Greeks used to wear bands of silk or leather or thin sheets of metal. These were used for supporting the metal plaque called *stephane* at the back.² In all probability these bands served to keep the curly hair unruffled. In the light of this evidence it should be noted that the persons who are shown wearing such forehead bands have extremely curly hair.

(1) Marshall, *Mohenjodaro & the Indus Civilization*, Vol. III pls. XC VIII & XCIX, 5-6, 8-9.

(2) O. Seyffert, *A Dictionary of Classical Antiquities*, p. 267. (London. 1957)

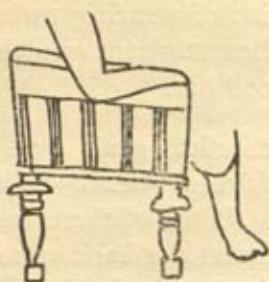


Fig. 44

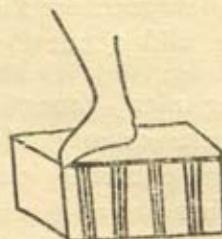


Fig. 45



Fig. 46



Fig. 47

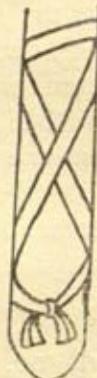


Fig. 48



Fig. 49

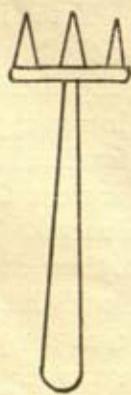


Fig. 50

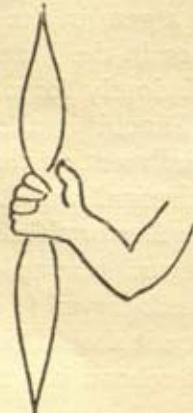


Fig. 51

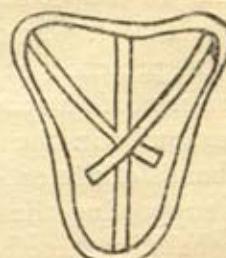


Fig. 52

It is not therefore unlikely that the Graeco-Romans brought this article of toilet in India. Further its numerous illustrations in the Gupta art bespeak of its popularity during the 4th—6th Centuries A. D. But the Indians might not have used leather bands; they probably preferred silken bands (*vālapāśyā*)¹ or bands of thin sheets of metal (*patrapāśyā*)².

An antelope-rider is shown with his curlish hair combed and brought forward on the forehead (Fig. 18). This is indeed a very interesting way of dressing hair and appears utterly un-Indian. It at once reminds us of the hair-style of the noblemen of the Imperial Roman court as is evident from their statues³. Still earlier the Hellenistic Greeks also used to comb their hair in this very fashion⁴. In India itself the style is characteristic of the Gandharan statuary⁵ and it therefore consequently follows that the Greeks should be credited with the importation of this fashion in India. In the light of this evidence the person sculptured in the Sanchi reliefs appears to be a Greek or a Roman. But it should be noted that the style did not find favour with the Indians as it is conspicuously absent in early or even later Indian art.

Another style consisted of collecting the whole mass of hair on the right and twisting it into a looped spherical knot on the forehead (Fig. 19). An exactly similar coiffure is worn by a *nāga* king in an early painting at Ajanta⁶. The latter however has secured the projecting knot by means of a jewelled band.

A *vyāla*-rider has combed back the whole mass of hair and gathered it into a vertical, projecting bunch at the back (Fig. 20). This style, as its representations in the early Indian art of Amara-vati⁷ and Ajanta⁸ would show, was quite common among women. But the Sanchi illustration points to its sometimes being preferred to by men as well.

(1) *Amara*, p. 155.

(2) *Ibid.*

(3) Paul Gustaf Hamberg, *Studies in Roman Imperial Art*, Pl. 22. (Uppsala, 1945).

(4) Margarete Bieber, *The Sculpture of the Hellenistic Age*, Figs. 190, 192, 194 & 196–97 (New York, 1961).

(5) Marshall, *Buddhist Art of Gandhara*, Fig. 32 (Cambridge, 1960).

(6) Yazdani, *op. cit.*, pt. III, Pl. XXXVI.

(7) Sivaramamurti, *op. cit.*, Pl. VI, 3.

(8) Yazdani, *op. cit.*, pt. III, pl. XXXVI.

Fig. 53

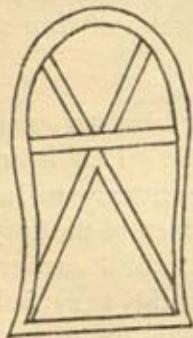


Fig. 54



Fig. 55 Fig. 56

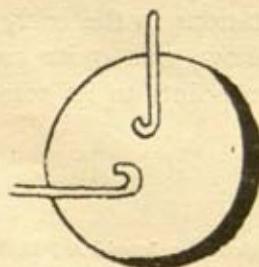
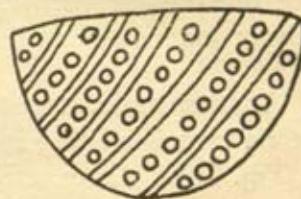
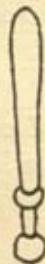
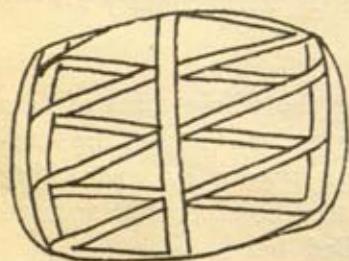


Fig. 57

The *bhikṣus* and brahmins are usually shown with rough, mat hair either long and loose, rolling on back or twisted in receding tiers on the top of head. This is precisely the way in which the anchorites wear their hair even today.

WOMEN

Women, as is usually the case, have always excelled men, so far as the art of coiffure is concerned. This is as it should be. But it does not hold good so far as the illustrations at Sanchi are concerned; for women, rich and poor, are almost invariably shown wearing long, elaborate head-dresses and do not afford any opportunity to study their coiffure.

The hair-style that is conspicuous is that of a *yakṣī*. She has dressed her hair in an exquisite fan-shaped projection on the top of the head (Pl. III). This projection was sometimes in the middle or on the left¹ and very rarely a fillet is also tied on the forehead in addition².

The style is extremely charming and resembles the glorious peacock-plume. It appears to be fairly common in the early period, more so during the Satavahana period and its excellent illustrations are to be found in the Amaravati art³. In the later period, though not so common, it flowers into a gorgeous plume in the Gupta period. Its finest representation is to be seen in a terracotta figurine from Rajghat⁴.

The classical poets have all praise for this style of coiffure which is referred to as *barha-bhāra-keśa*. A couple of verses in the *Daśakumāra-charitam* of Dandin bespeak of the appreciation of this fashion. The poet refers to "the arranging of hair in the style of the feathers of a peacock (*lilā-mayūra-barhya-bhangya-kesapāśam*) and to the mass of hair arranged in imitation of peacock feathers (*barhi-barhāvalim vidambayatā keśakalāpena*)⁵. The style is no doubt charming and adds considerable dignity to the personality.

(1) Pl. XLVIII,

(2) Pl. XLVII.

(3) Sivramamurti, *op. cit.*, pls VI, 5 & IX, 2.

(4) V. S. Agrawala, "Rajghat Terracottas", *JUPHS*, Vol. XIV, pt. I, Fig. 1, p. 4.

(5) See V. S. Agrawala, Art Evidence in Kalidasa, "JUPHS", Vol. XXII, 1949, p. 89.

Fig. 58

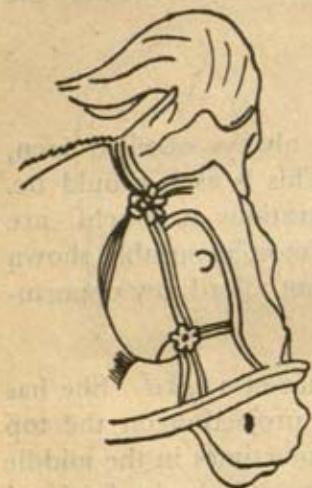


Fig. 59

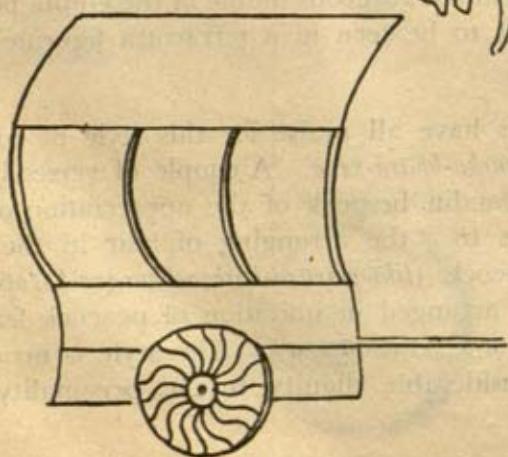
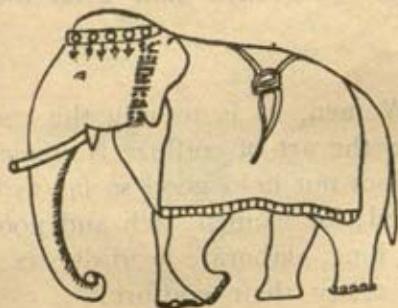


Fig. 60



Fig. 61

Head-dress

As already noted there is absolutely no variety in the coiffure of men and women as well on account of the fact that they are usually shown wearing headgears which are as follows :

MEN

Among men the commonest type of head-dress is the turban which is worn by kings and commoners, one and all. It is wound round the head in curved tiers and is interwoven with the long hair. It is tied in such a way that a ball of material, alongwith hair, forms a sort of crest in the front (Fig. 21). The practice of wearing turbans in this fashion was extremely common in early period. This is demonstrated by its innumerable illustrations in the early Indian art of the Sunga,¹ the Satavahana² and the Kushana³ periods as also in the Gandhara art.⁴ Even today in many parts of the country, particularly in the villages in Maharashtra and Punjab the turban is worn in the same way but the spherical protrusion is replaced by a fan-shaped one.

The turban is usually referred to as *usniṣa* and Kalidasa tells us that it was sometimes adorned by jewelled strips.⁵ In the reliefs a *yakṣa* is shown wearing a turban ornamented with jewelled strips (Fig. 21).

As already noted the kings and commoners are all shown with turbans worn in the same fashion. However, some of the kings, who may be sovereigns, are shown with an elongated, rolled, ornamental piece in their turban (Fig. 22). This ornamental piece is embellished with beaded bands or pearl strings at the front end while at the back it has a discshaped attachment decorated with a lotus-petal pattern. The whole piece may only be a wad of cloth, inserted at the junction of the transverse crossings of the turban. Sometimes this ornamental piece is fixed on the left of the forehead.⁶

(1) B. M. Barua, *Brahm*, Bk. III, Pl. LVII, 62; Pl. LVIII, 63-64 etc. (Calcutta, 1937).

(2) Douglas Barret, *Amaravati Sculptures in the British Museum*, Pl. V, (London, 1954).

(3) Vogel, *op. cit.*, Pl. XXI, b.

(4) Marshall, *op. cit.*, Figs. 38-39.

(5) *Raghu*, XVIII, 44; XVII, 23.

(6) Pl. LIII.

Fig. 62

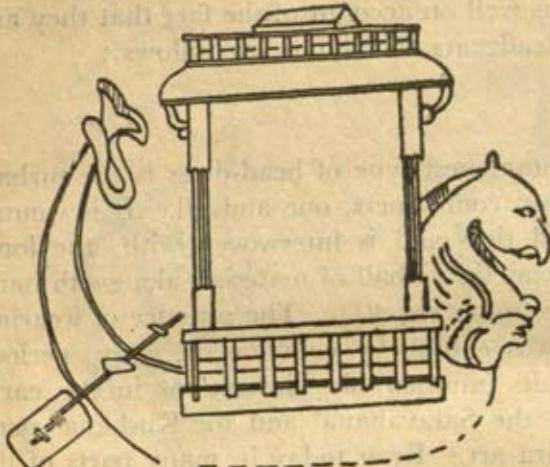


Fig. 65

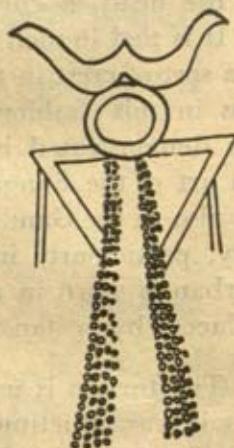


Fig. 64

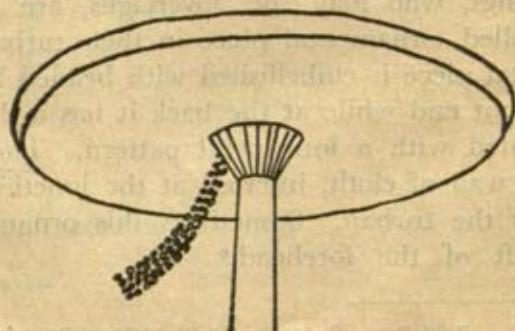
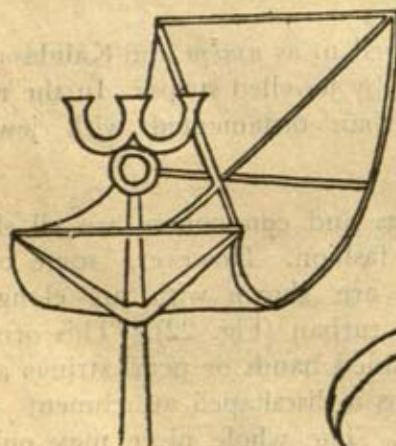


Fig. 63

TIARAS

The most noteworthy article among the head-dresses is the tiara which makes its appearance in the reliefs. Before discussing the antiquity and development of tiaras it is better to describe them first.

A *yakṣa* is shown wearing a tiara (Fig. 23) with a ball-like crest ornamented with lotus-petal patterns. The crest appears to be only a copy in costly metal of that in the turban; the latter however represents the mass of hair. The specimen therefore is of unique importance inasmuch as it marks the intervening stage in the evolution of turban into tiara.

A *vyāla*-rider wears a small tiara with a circular crest in the centre ornamented with a rosette boss¹. Another similar tiara is worn by another *vyāla*-rider²; the crest is seen on the right but its decorative pattern is not clear.

The tiara worn by an antelope-rider has a leaf-shaped projections attached to the basal strip.³

Such tiaras are conspicuously absent in the art of earlier period and as such their presence at Sanchi is betoken of their being an innovation of the early Satavahana period. Similar tiaras can also be noted in the later Satavahana sculptures at Kanheri⁴ and some Satavahana terracotta figurines from Ter⁵. They further continue in the later period and some of their finest representations occur in the Gupta-Vakataka art at Ajanta where they appear to have been especially favoured by ladies belonging to the higher strata of society. Such dainty tiaras are usually referred to as *ardha-mukutās* which were worn by the dignitaries and princes and Bharata prescribes that generals and minor chiefs should don *ardha-mukutās*⁶.

It would not be out of place to trace here the development of tiaras which can be noticed at Sanchi itself. As already noted

(1) Pl. LXVI, b.

(2) Pl. *ibid.*

(3) Pl. XLVII.

(4) F. Zimmer, *Art of Indian Asia*, Vol. II, Pl. 85 (New York, 1965).

(5) These are in possession of Sri R. K. Lamture of Ter.

(6) *Natyashastra* (Ed. by M. M. Ghosh), Vol. I, Ch. XXIII, 29, p. 430 (Calcutta, 1951).

it is absent in the Sunga art wherein the commonest head-gear is a turban, sometimes profusely ornamented with beaded patterns. In the early Satavahana period the turban is wound round the head in such a way that a ball of the material along with the mass of hair projects in the centre on the forehead. The tiara therefore may only be a copy of this in metal. Thus the early tiaras consists of a basal strip with a circular crest in the middle. The spherical protrusion of the turban at Sanchi itself, is in some cases embellished with jewelled bands (Fig. 21). The same pattern also continues in the crest of the tiara. This development of turban into a delicate tiara is more distinctly traceable in the Kushana art of Mathura wherein the spherical protrusion of the turban is replaced first by a circular plaque,¹ probably of metal and is then evolved into a tiara which, in character and composition, is not very different from its prototype patterns in turban. However, it needs a special mention that the same development takes place, though indistinctly, at least a century earlier at Sanchi itself.

CROWN (Fig. 24)

There is only one illustration of an elaborate crown which now is completely obliterated in the reliefs but is still preserved in the excellent drawings of FERGUSSON.² It consists of a round basal strip, undoubtedly of metal, above which rises a vertical crest flanked by curved motifs. On either side are a series of curved bands. Thus this is a true *kirīṭa* which by far is the earliest of its kind and can therefore be taken to be the prototype of the lavishly jewelled *kirīṭas* of the later period.

Indra's Head-dress

Indra, appearing in the *Visvantara Jātaka* is shown wearing a very curious head-dress which is tall and cylindrical. It is also decorated with chequered patterns all over (Fig. 25). The tall, cylindrical head-dress is a special characteristics of Indra, so much so that it can be taken as a reliable criterion for identifying his representations in early Buddhist arts.³

(1) Vogel, *op. cit.*, Pl. XXXVI, b.

(2) *Tree and Serpent Worship*, Pl. XXXVI, Fig. 1, (London, 1868).

(3) For an excellent discussion of Indra's head-dress see Coomaraswamy, "Early Indian Iconography-Indra", *Eastern Art*, Vol. I, 1928, pp. 33 ff.

A somewhat similar but taller turban is worn by an anchorite (Fig. 26). It resembles the turban worn by the Parsis of Bombay. Its shape, however, tempts one to identify the figure of the anchorite as that of Indra.

CAPS

Many persons, obviously foreigners, in the Orchestra scene (Pl. VIII) are shown wearing caps. They are tall, conical caps sometimes with a pointed top and attached with streamers which are seen fluttering behind. Very similar caps with streamers are worn by foreigners in the famous "Bacchalian" scene at Ajanta in Cave I¹. The latter have been identified as Persian and hence those wearing these caps at Sanchi therefore can also be identified as Persians with whom India came into contact with the invasion of Darius in the 5th Cent. B. C. These domical caps have been identified as the *kulaha* caps referred to by Bana and Dr. AGRAVALA rightly infers that the word *kulaha* has been derived from the Persian *khola*².

In the same panel again some persons are shown wearing tall, conical caps which are exactly similar to those worn by some Saka chieftains sculptured in the Kushana art of Mathura³. They may therefore be the Sakas.

WOMEN

A majority of women are shown wearing extremely elaborate head-dresses giving an appearance of wigs and their hair can, in many cases, be distinctly seen peeping out from below the head-dress. (Fig. 27). The head-dresses are decorated and have a thickened edge near the forehead⁴. (Pl. VI). At the back the head-dress usually has braided plaits, joined together (Fig. 28). The front margin of the head-dress of a queen is adorned with beaded bands⁵.

Very rarely women also wear delicate tiaras similar to those worn by men⁶.

(1) Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. I, Pl. XXXIX (Oxford, 1930).

(2) *Harsacharita*; *Ek Saṅskritik Adhyayana*, (in Hindi), p. 155. (Patna, 1955)

(3) Vogel, *op. cit.*, Pl. IV, a-b.

(4) Pl. XXV.

(5) Pl. LXIII.

(6) *Ibid.*

The foregoing study of coiffure and head-dresses shows that men, during the latter half of 1st Cent. B. C., did not bestow proper care on their hair as they wore turbans. In this respect they were the exact opposite of their successors in the Gupta period who vied with each other in order to prove themselves true *nāgarakas* of Vatsyayana. This need not surprise us for even today an average Indian villager pays very little or no attention at all to his hair as he usually wears a turban. The reliefs show that the turban was donned in a very complicated manner and was also sometimes ornamented with jewelled or beaded bands. Some men went a step further and adorned it with a circular metallic plaque on the front while a few donned tiaras, which appear to have been introduced during this period.

Women, too, surprisingly enough, did not care much for their hair for the simple reason that they also usually wore complicated head-dresses. And even if they did not wear head-gears occasionally they had very few styles of coiffure to choose from. They favoured most the peacock-plume style. This, however, might have been the choice of the women in the surrounding region i. e., Malva for we know for certain from plastic representations that some other styles were also in vogue in other parts of the country.

Personal Ornaments

Indians seem to have great love for personal ornamentation and consequently the jeweller's art reached a high degree of perfection in ancient India. This is amply borne out by the earliest examples of jewellery from Harappa where a large hoard was found in the course of excavations. All the objects in this hoard are of gold and their discovery in association with a few pieces of charcoal is indicative of the findspot being a jeweller's work-shop¹. Similarly at Lothal (Gujarat State), another Harappan site, were found thousands of tiny beads of gold². But among the sites of the later period that at Taxila is the only one which deserves a special mention in this connection.

Literary references to personal ornaments are abounding. However, only a few texts give adequate descriptions of different

(1) ARASI, 1928-29, pp. 76 ff.

(2) S. R. Rao, "The Excavations at Lothal", Lalit Kalā, Nos. 3-4, 1957, p. 87, Fig. 30.

types of ornaments. Among those the most important is the *Arthaśāstra* of Kautilya which not only mentions in detail the different varieties of ornaments but also gives the various technical processes involved in their manufacture such as soldering, gilding and setting of stones etc. alongwith the materials required.

The love of Indians for ornaments can be said to be almost proverbial for figures in early Indian art of the Sunga, Satavahana and the Kushana period are marked by profusion of personal ornaments while the sophistication sets in only during the Gupta period. In the Sanchi reliefs, executed during the Satavahana period, is also noticed the same characteristic i. e. the profusion of personal ornaments.

ORNAMENTS FOR HEAD (*mastaka-bhuṣaṇas*)

A female musician is shown wearing a jewelled band around her head¹. It is an altogether new ornament which is totally absent in the earlier period. As already noted the forehead band appears to have been introduced in India by the Hellenistic Greeks or Romans and the Sanchi specimen may therefore be of classical origin. In fact the female musician who is wearing it may also probably be a Greek or a Roman for the *Periplus* records that among the principal items of export into India from the Roman empire were musicians and dancing girls for the royal harem².

This ornament, however, does not appear to have been favoured by Indian women as it is the only one of its kind at Sanchi. Elsewhere the only notable example of an exactly similar ornament is to be seen in the later group of paintings at Ajanta wherein it is worn by a standard-bearer who, from his facial features and coiffure, appears to be a foreigner³.

A dwarf wears around his head what looks like a spray or wreath which was a very common ornament in the classical world. (Fig. 29). It is totally absent in early Indian art with the solitary exception of that worn by a palace maid depicted in an early painting at Ajanta⁴.

(1) Pl. XVIII, b.

(2) Majumdar, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

(3) Yazdani, *op. cit.*, pt. I, Pl. XXXIV.

(4) *Ibid.*, pt. III, Pl. XXX, c.

FOREHEAD ORNAMENTS

A few women are shown wearing a thin, disc-shaped ornament on their forehead (Fig. 27). It appears to be suspended from the parting of the hair (*sīmanta*) by means of a chain which, however, is not seen because of the elaborate head-dress.

Such head ornament is very common in the Sunga,¹ Satavahana² and the Kushana³ art and is referred to as *lalātika*⁴ in literature. Very similar head-ornament is still in use particularly in North India where it is known as *bindī*. This disc-pendant is later replaced by a big jewel (*sīmanta-chudāmaya*).

EAR ORNAMENTS (*karṇa bhūṣaṇas*)

The varieties of ear ornaments are far and few between. They are as follows :

The commonest ear ornament is a large, heavy, slab-like, squarish pendant suspended by a long piece of wire through the ear-lobe. It is either plain or decorated with a rosette-shaped pattern in low relief⁵ (Fig. 30). Sometimes two such squarish pendants are worn in each ear.⁶

This type of ear-ornament is fairly common in the Satavahana and the Kushana period. It is sufficiently large to cover the ear-lobe completely and hence SIVARAMAMURTI identifies it as the *karṇa-veṣṭana*⁶ variety while Dr. AGRAVALA takes it to be a *mṛṇāla-kuṇḍala*.⁷

Large pearls, either single⁸ or double⁹ were also worn as ear ornaments.

Another variety of ear ornaments is a cylinder, suspended horizontally. (Fig. 31). It is severely plain. The type is fairly common in early period. It appears to have been derived from the primitive

(1) Barua, *Barhut*, Pt. III, Pl. LXIV, 74.

(2) Vogel, *op. cit.*, Pl. I, a.

(3) Sivaramamurti, *op. cit.*, Pl. VI, 5.

(4) Amara, p. 155.

(5) Pl. XI.

(6) Sivaramamurti, *loc. cit.*, p. 109.

(7) "Mathura Terracottas," *JUPHS*, Vol. IX, No.2, pp. 16 & 19, Pl. IV, Fig. 16.

(8) Pl. LXI.

(9) Pl. XLIII.

habit of adorning the ear with a piece of wood or a tree-leaf or a small strip of tinted palm leaf (*tāla-patra*) which was the simplest ornament of ancient times and some of the lower classes in South India still wear actual palm leaf scrolls in their ears. The Sanchi example may therefore be the *patrāṅkura* type of ornament.

An atlant is shown wearing a thick spiral which is possibly a *sarpa-kundala* similar to that worn by *yakṣa* from Pitalkhora¹ (Fig. 32).

A *vyāla*-rider wears an ear ornament consisting of two pearl scrolls probably with drop pendants (Fig. 33). This is an altogether new type which becomes common only in the Gupta-Vakataka period.²

NECK ORNAMENTS

The variety of neck ornaments in the reliefs is indeed interesting. The commonest among these is a heavy necklace composed of a number of strings of either beads or pearls with spacers at regular intervals. The spacers are squarish or rectangular in shape and because of their slab-like nature these necklaces justify the appellation *phalaka-hāra*. They can be further sub-divided in such varieties as the *dvi-phalaka*, the *tri-phalaka* and the *pañcha-phalaka hāras* i. e. those having either two or three or five spacers as detailed by Kautilya.³ Sometimes the spacers are embossed with a rosette pattern (Pl. V).

The *phalaka-hāras* have been dealt with first for the reason that by far they are the commonest neck-ornaments of the early period.

Simpler varieties of neck-ornaments also occur. They are described below.

Some ladies are shown wearing simple, single-stringed necklaces. (Fig. 34). They are comparatively shorter than the *phalaka-hāras*. They are obviously the *ekāvalis* which become extremely common during the Gupta period.

Another variety of the *ekāvali* has a heavy, cylindrical pendant in the centre.⁴ It is undoubtedly the *yasti* type of neck-

(1) Deshpande, *op. cit.*, AI, No. 15, p. 82, Pl. LVII, A.

(2) Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. III, Pl. LXXIII; Pt. IV, Pl. XX, b.

(3) *Arthashastra*, (Ed. by R. Shamasastri), P. 77. (Mysore, 1951, 4th Ed.)

(4) Pl. XXVII

lace mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra*.¹ This type becomes the raging fashion of the day during the Gupta period when the central bead (*nāyaka-maṇi*) is generally blue i. e. either sapphire or lapis lazuli as is evident from its innumerable illustrations at Ajanta.

It is noteworthy that the *ekāvalis* are usually seen worn by ladies only in the reliefs. This would point to its being a new type which, as our illustrations would show, was brought into vogue by women. The *ekāvali*, however, takes considerable time to be common among men and women as there are only a few illustrations of it in early period. Among these can be cited the specimens occurring in an early painting at Ajanta² and in the Mathura art of the Kushana period.³ Thus the type somehow continues in the beginning centuries of the Christian era but becomes extremely common in the Gupta-Vakataka period. It is therefore wrong to suppose, as is generally the case, that the *ekāvali* was an innovation of the Gupta period. Its popularity in the Gupta period is only betoken of the weakness of the people of that period for such sophisticated items luxury.

KANTHIS

There are a few representations of *kanthīs*. The one worn by a dwarf is decorated with fish-scale pattern in low relief and tassels are seen fringing its lower margin.⁴

A *vṛ̥kṣa*-rider is shown wearing a necklace having charming pearl tassels.⁵

A *vakṣa* wears a *kanthī* fringed with large spherical beads with tassels. These are alternated with what looks like clusters of pearl-strings (Fig. 35).

The *kanthī* worn by an atlant is most elaborate (Fig. 36). It consists of curved piece of gold or plated with gold which is decorated with rosettes and from which are suspended pendants composed of big spherical beads with drop-pendants; these are alter-

(1) p. 177.

(2) Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. III, Pl. XXX, c.

(3) Vogel, *op. cit.*, Pl. XII.

(4) Pl. XL.

(5) Pl. KXVI, b.

nated with what looks like pearl scrolls with tassels at their lower end. The *kanythī* bears family resemblance to one found at Taxila which is ascribable to the 1st Century B. C.¹

Aṣṭamaṅgalaka hāras²

Another type of *hāras* consists of a number of pendants of different shapes (Pl. V). Two such *hāras* have eleven and thirteen pendants respectively. The former, according to Dr. AGRAVALA, has *Sun*, *Śukra*, *padmasara*, *aṅkuśa*, *Vaijayantī*, *pañkaja*, *mīna-mithuna*, *Srīvatsa*, *paraśu*, *darpaṇa* and *kamala*. The latter has *kamala* *aṅkuśa*, *kalpa-vṛkṣa*, *darpaṇa*, *Srīvatsa*, *Vaijayantī*, *pañkaja*, *mīnayugula*, *paraśu*, *puspadāma*, *chhatra* and two other pendants which cannot be identified.³ The pendants can better be called amulets and it is not improbable that such necklaces were worn in those days with some definite purpose.

From the point of view of our study it is interesting to note that pendants of the shapes described above have actually been found at ancient sites and have been dated, on the basis of stratification to early historical period. Thus the axe (*paraśu*) and *aṅkuśa* pendants are fairly common at sites in north India and some of their finest specimens from Koshambi are in the collection of Dr. M. G. DIKSHIT of Nagpur. The *kalpa-vṛakṣa* bears a striking resemblance to the ball pendant of agate from the Bhir mound at Taxila which is dated to 3rd Cent. B.C.⁴ The central amulet, identified as *pañkaja* by Dr. Agrawala,⁵ appears to be only an elaborate form of *triratna*. Such *triratna* pendants are not uncommon at ancient Indian sites. Terracotta *triratna* pendants have been found at Ter⁶ while an exquisitely fashioned specimen in shell is reported from Taxila.⁷ The latter site has also yielded a pendant, which is not far removed typologically from the *darpaṇa* pendant in the *hāra*.⁸ So also are the *Sūrya* and *kamala* pendants which are reminiscent

(1) Marshall, *Taxila*, Vol. III, Pl. 193. No. 134. (Cambridge, 1951).

(2) Pl. XXXVII, a.

(3) *Harṣacharita*, p. 120.

(4) H. C. Beck, "The Beads from Taxila, p. 47, Pl. III, 14. (MASI, No. 65, Delhi, 1941).

(5) *loc. cit.*, p. 120.

(6) Now in the collection of Sri R. K. Lamture of Ter.

(7) Beck *op. cit.*, p. 57, Pl. VIII, 7.

(B) *Ibid.*

of similar beads in terracotta from Nevasa¹. The *Srīvatsa* pendants too are not rare.

The *Śukra* and *puṣpadāma* pendants are almost identical in shape. They might, in all probability, be a specific variety of granular beads which are not altogether wanting at ancient sites. The nearest parallel can be found in the faience specimens from Taxila.² Nothing can be said about the fish pendant. But I have seen after an exquisitely carved shell fish, with transverse perforation, which, however, is too large to be classed as a bead.³

These elaborate necklaces with pendants of various shapes have a special significance by virtue of the auspicious character that is associated with them. Of these eight auspicious symbols were fairly common in the Kushana period and on account of their number were known as *aṣṭa-maṅgalakas* meaning thereby eight auspicious symbols. These occur on a *ayāgapṭa* of the Kushana period from Mathura⁴. But they already appear to have been used in necklaces by people during the early Satavahana period. Additions to the original number eight increased the symbols and hence we have eleven and thirteen auspicious pendants in the *hāras* occurring in the Sanchi reliefs. But the name *aṣṭamangalaka-mālā* appears to have been coined later. It is referred to by Bāṇa who describes that it was worn by the chiefs in Harsa's army⁵.

Vaikaksyaka

Some men and women are shown wearing an ornament composed of two bands crossing each other on the breast. The bands seem to issue from ornamental discs adorned with rosette-shaped bosses and have a similar disc at the crossing, serving as a spacer. The bands may be silken or may even be pearl strings. The ornament is identified as *vaikaksyaka* which was usually composed of gold threads and is hence referred to as *hema-vai kaksyaka*⁶. However it does not appear to be common in the early period (Fig. 37).

- (1) H. D. Sankalia & Others, *From History to Prehistory at Nevasa* (1954-56), Fig. 170, Nos. 6-7. (Poona, 1960).
- (2) Beck, *op. cit.*, p. 61 Pl. X, 2-3.
- (3) Now in the collection of Sri R. K. Lamture of Ter.
- (4) V. S. Agrawala, *Guide to Lucknow Museum*, Pl. V, No. J-249.
- (5) Agrawala, *op. cit.*, p. 120.
- (6) See Sivaramamurti, *Mirrors of Indian Culture*, p. 64 (MASI, No. 73), Delhi 1955;

HAND ORNAMENTS

Bangles are worn by both men and women. The latter, however, wear a number of them, sometimes as many as eight in one hand¹. Those worn by men are thick and heavy. Usually four or five or more such bangles are worn by men who also sometimes wear jewelled bracelets as well. A *yakṣa* wears three such heavy bracelets which are made of twisted wires. They are profusely adorned with beaded bands (Fig. 38). The same *yakṣa* also wears bracelets, alternating with jewelled bangles. The bracelets are composed of beads of precious or semi-precious stones. The jewelled bangles are referred to as *ratna-valayas* while bracelets may be *phalakavalayas* which are said to be composed of large gem-slabs.

Girdles (mekhalā)

Girdles are usually shown worn by women while men are not at all wearing them as they did in the later period. However, there is not much variety in the patterns of girdles at Sanchi; they are composed of either one², two³, or three⁴ or even four⁵ strands. (Pt. IV). The one worn by Māyā in the 'Nativity' scene is a *mekhalā*⁶ of three strands having a round clasp in the centre⁶.

Anklet (nupūras)

Anklets are worn by women only. They are either thick or thin. Some women are shown wearing only one heavy anklet, round in section and is similar to that worn presently by women in the villages of Maharashtra. In addition to such a heavy anklet some women wear a number of smaller and thinner anklets, above the heavier one. A number of such anklets are worn and they sometimes reach the knees (Pl. III).

The custom of wearing heavy anklets was in vogue during the early period only and the same is true of the large number of thin anklets as well. In the later period only one thin anklet was worn on each leg.

(1) Pl. XI.

(2) Pl. XI

(3) Pl. XXVI

(4) Pl. XLVIII

(5) Pl. XXV

(6) Pl. XXX

Of the anklets, the heavier ones must have been hollow from within as is the case today and the space hollow space was probably filled with small stones which produced sweet jingling sound at the time of walking. This explains the appellation *mañjirā*.

Domestic Vessels & House-Hold Objects

A good number of vessels and other house-hold articles are depicted in the reliefs. They are as follows :

WATER JARS

1. A jar with wide, flaring mouth, constricted neck and globular body bulging at the shoulders; it has a round base.¹ Sometimes a cup is kept upon it in an inverted position to serve as lid.²

2. The water jar of a hunter³ (Fig. 39). is high-necked and has an elongated, bulging belly. The most noteworthy feature is that it is secured in a net of strings. This practice appears to be quite common in the early period for the *Silappadikāram* relates as to how strings were tied to a jar for carrying.⁴ Such jars are usually represented below the Buddhā's bed in the *Mahāparinivāna* scenes in Buddhist art and Buddhist monks are said to be carrying with them a water jar, named *kundikā*⁵ which was probably the same as the Sanchi specimen.

Very similar water jars are depicted in the panels showing the "Nativity" scene wherein the elephants flanking Maya are shown holding such jars in their trunks bathing her.⁶

It would be interesting to know that such jars are found in large numbers in many parts of the country, particularly in Western India and the Deccan, in the levels ascribable to the centuries about the beginning of the Christian era. The pottery, now labelled as the "Red Polished Ware" is said to be the Indian imitation of the

(1) Pl. XL.

(2) Pl. XXIV.

(3) Pl. XXIX.

(4) V. V. R. Dikshitar, *Silappadikāram*, Canto XXX, Vs. 59-70, p. 339. (Madras, 1939).

(5) J. Legge, *A Record of the Buddhist Kingdoms (an account by Fa-Hien)*, p. 112, f. n.1. (London, 1950).

(6) Pl. XI

famous Roman "Samian Ware".¹ It is a thin-walled ware, of very fine fabric and has fine polished surface.

3. An ewer (Fig. 40) with flaring mouth, short, constricted neck, globular body and possibly a trumpet base; it is provided with a curved handle and an oblique spout. Its every shape is suggestive of its being made of metal.²

4. Indra's jar³ of ambrosia is a globular vessel, provided with a curved handle at the top. Such jars, of brass are used today for storing water of sacred rivers.

BOWL

A bowl possibly containing ghee is depicted in the *Visvantara Jātaka*.⁴ It is a sub-spherical bowl with a featureless rim.

WINE CUP

A demon in Mara's army⁵ is shown drinking wine in a cup having a featureless rim and tapering sides meeting in a pointed base. Such cups of clay are found in large quantities at ancient sites in North India in the strata belonging to the Sunga and Kushana period and they also continue in the Gupta period.⁶ Moreover, such wine cups were also made of the tree leaves. Kalidasa refers to drinking cups made of betel leaves (*tāmbulānām dalaih*).⁷ Such cups (*drona*), made of banyan or *palasa* leaves are used even today.

Literary evidence points to the widespread habit of drinking in ancient India and should be noted that during the period under review wine was imported in large quantities into India from the Roman empire.⁸

LADLE (FIG. 41)

A ladle consisting of a small, circular receptacle to which is attached a long, horizontal handle; it bears family resemblance

(1) B. Subba Rao, *Baroda Through the Ages*, pp. 56 ff (Baroda, 1953).

(2) Pl. XI.

(3) Pl. XXIX.

(4) *Ibid.*

(5) *Ibid.*

(6) Y. D. Sharma, "Exploration of Historical Sites," *AI*, No. 9, 1953, Fig. 6, 5.

(7) *Raghu*, IV, 42.

(8) E. H. Warmington, *Commerce between Roman Empire and India*, p. 265. (Cambridge, 1928).

to that from Taxila. The latter is made of beaten copper and is identical in shape to the Roman *patella* which was used for pouring libations¹.

Ladles are of rare occurrence at ancient Indian sites. This is indicative of their use being restricted to ceremonial purposes. The Sanchi specimen is also shown as being used for pouring ghee (?) in the sacred fire. The silver specimen from Rupar, datable to the Kushana period, is also taken to have been meant for ceremonial purposes only.²

Ladle is usually referred to as *daruhastaka*³ possibly on account of its having a wooden handle.

BASKETS

Baskets also occur in the reliefs. The one in the *Viśvantara Jātaka*⁴ contains fruits and is apparently of split bamboo. Such baskets were also suspended from a bamboo pole by means of strings to facilitate carrying⁵.

Another basket is squat and cylindrical and has a broad, rounded rim⁶. A similar basket, but with a curved handle is carved on a Roman wine jug of bronze (2nd Cent. A. D.) from Kolhapur.⁷

TRAYS

An oblong tray with rounded corners; it contains offerings.⁸ A similar one, but rather deep, is also depicted⁹.

From the carvings it is not possible to say anything about the material of which the trays were made. The archaeological evidence, however, shows that they were usually made of stone as is obvious from the large number of trays unearthed at Taxila. They are assigned to the Saka-Parthian period and bear unmistakable Hellenistic influence¹⁰.

(1) Marshall, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 594; Vol. III, Pl. 175, No. 305.

(2) Y. D. Sharma, "Past Patterns in Living as unfolded by excavations at Rupar," *Lalit Kala*, No. 1-2, 1956, p. 127, P. J.

(3) *Amara*, p. 207.

(4) Pl. XXIX.

(5) Pl. LII, b.

(6) Pl. XXXII.

(7) Karl Khandalwala, "Brahmapuri," *Lalit Kala*, No. 7, 1960, Fig. 5.

(8) Pl. XXXI.

(9) Pl. X & XIII.

(10) Marshall, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 493-94.

CASKETS

A huge sacred relic casket (Fig. 42) occurs in the scene depicting "the War of Relics"¹. It is cylindrical and has incised horizontal grooves. It also has a knobbed lid. Such cylindrical caskets have been reported from many early historic sites in North and North-West India.

SACRED FIRE RECEPTACLES

In the *Viśvantara jātaka*² some brahmins are shown pouring ghee (?) in the sacred fire which is issuing forth from a trough-shaped receptacle (Fig. 43.) It has a thick, pedestalled base. A similar but smaller and deeper receptacle has a longer pedestal³.

Domestic Articles

The panel depicting the village of Uruvila (Pl. II) is most interesting on account of the representations of a variety of domestic scenes showing housewives engaged in winnowing and pounding grain and preparing bread etc. Herein therefore we find some domestic articles which are rarely to be seen in Indian art. They are as follows :

MORTAR AND PESTLE

A lady is seen pounding grain, probably rice in a mortar (Pl. II). The mortar approximates an hour-glass in shape and is undoubtedly of stone. The pestle must be of wood and the lady is shown standing while pounding grain. Exactly similar pestles and mortars can be seen even today, particularly in the coastal areas of Maharashtra where rice is pounded in the very same way as is shown in the reliefs.

WINNOWING BASKET (PL. VI).

Another lady in the same panel is shown with a winnowing basket in which she is winnowing grain. The basket is shallow and oblong, with one of its sides rounded. Such winnowing baskets are still in use.

(1) Pl. XV.

(2) Pl. XXIX.

(3) Pl. LII, b.

The winnowing basket is referred to as *sūppa*¹ (Sk. *sūrpa*) and it must have been made of split bamboo as the case today.

SADDLE AND QUERN (PL. VI).

Saddle and quern also occur. The saddle, four-legged, is oblong while the quern is cylindrical. Such saddles and querns are found in early historic levels at ancient sites all over the country.

In the same panel (PL. VI) is shown a tall tripod-like object on which a woman, in standing posture, is pounding something with a quern. According to FOUCHER the lady is rolling the cake.² This would show that the method of rolling cakes in a standing posture existed in India at such an early period. This is therefore the earliest and the only representation of its kind in the whole range of Indian art. This novel method of preparing cakes is undoubtedly un-Indian. It only can be said that some Indian imitated this typically Greek method of preparing bread.

Furniture

It would be no exaggeration to say that our knowledge of ancient Indian furniture is almost next to nothing. The total absence of any pieces of furniture in the remains recovered from ancient sites is undoubtedly due to its being fashioned out of wood and similar perishable materials which, because of the hot and damp climate of the country, is impossible to survive. We have therefore to depend solely on the plastic representations of furniture.

In the Sanchi reliefs the illustrations of the items of furniture are far and few between. However they do offer a pleasing variety for study.

THRONES

Some ancient texts such as the *Yukti-kalpa-tarī* deal at length with different items of furniture and so far as thrones are concerned their classification and descriptions are most elaborate. However, the texts being of a considerably later date, the data furnished

(1) S. A. Joglekar, (Ed), *Gathasaptati*, V. 557 (Poona 1956)

(2) Marshall & Foucher, *op. cit.*, Pl LII.

them is not of much use for the study of thrones in such early reliefs as those at Sanchi.

Throne, or the royal seat, is often described as a seat *par excellence* and is therefore reckoned as a symbol of sovereignty. It is generally referred to as *sīhāsana* or the 'Lion-seat' so called because of its animal supports. No Sanchi specimen has either lion or animal supports, but nevertheless they are rich seats. They can be grouped in two varieties viz. : those without back and arms and those with arms.

All the thrones, except one, are without back and arms and most of these are what can be called rich *moyās*. They are therefore too modest to be classed as thrones. They have an ovalloid seat, rather squattish, but well-stuffed and are decorated with beaded bands and criss-cross and cheveron patterns¹.

Another throne of this class has an oblong seat, richly upholstered. Its upper margin is adorned with a cheveron band while the criss-cross pattern in the lower margin probably represents the wicker-work.

These seats have on them a thick piece of cloth which has tassels at its four corners.

The throne of the demon king Mara has a squarish seat mounted on slender legs². The parallel lines on the seat show that it is made of interwoven strings or *newār*. It bears a striking resemblance to the *chowki* used in North India today.

THRONES WITH ARMS

There is only one illustration of this class (Fig. 44). It has a rectangular seat mounted on finely chiselled legs with broad, squarish bases. The throne has no back but is provided with side-arms with vertical bars. Such carved balusters of ivory, ascribable to 5th-6th Cent. A. D. have been found in the excavations at Brahmanabad-Mansura in Sind³. From the same site are also reported a few carved pieces of ivory which have been rightly inden-

(1) Pl. XLIX, a.

(2) Pl. XXIX

(3) ARASI, 1908-09, p. 85 :

tified by COUSENS as members of rich settees, fashioned in Sind even to this day¹.

The seat in question is extremely interesting on account of the fact that it does not afford sitting on it in the true Indian fashion i. e. in the cross-legged posture, because of the side arms. Furthermore the illustrations of such seats are conspicuous by their absence in later period; they are confined only to the early period. Thus it occurs in the Sunga and the Satavahana art at Bharhut² and Ajanta³ respectively and on a terracotta from Koshambi which also can be ascribed to the Sunga period⁴. It also occurs in a Gandhara relief in the Peshawar Museum.⁵ But it would be interesting to know in this connection that such seats with side arms were very common in the Hellenistic and Roman world whence, in all probability, the type found its way into India. However, it does not appear to have found favour with Indians for the obvious reason that it does not afford to sit in the true Indian fashion of cross-legged posture.

FOOT-STOOLS (*pāda-pīṭha*)

Foot-stool or *pāda-pīṭha* was in fact a necessary adjunct of throne in association with which it formed a part of the royal insignia. Thus it was the *pāda-pīṭha* that was worshipped by the tributary chiefs.

The *pāda-pīṭhas* in the Sanchi reliefs are all rectangular in shape and appear to be simple blocks of wood. sometimes they are decorated with vertical bands. (Fig. 45).

The representation only of this type of *pāda-pīṭha* at Sanchi shows that it was extremely common in the latter half of the 1st cent. B. C. This type, however, does not continue to be common in the later period when it occurs very rarely. Thus the only comparable example we have is the one that occurs in a later painting at Ajanta⁶.

(1) *Ibid.*

(2) A. Cunningham, *The Stūpa of Bharhut*, Pl. XLVIII, 2. (Varanasi, 1962).

(3) Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. III, Pl XXX. c.

(4) Now in the Central Antiquities Section of the Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi.

(5) Marshall, *op. cit.*, Fig. 62.

(6) Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. IV, Pl. XVII, a.

SEATS (*mañcha*)

There are only a few representations of seats. The one occupied by a *nāga* queen¹ is a squat *morā*, slightly bulging at sides. It is decorated with a curved, beaded bands at the front. The upper and lower margin of the seat are slightly thickened and appear to be rolled.

Another seat, of Maya², is similar in shape to the preceding example; but it has lotus petal decoration on the sides. Its upper margin is adorned with a beaded band.

The seat of an anchorite³ is altogether different in shape than the decorated specimens described above. It is only a rectangular block, possibly of wood, of considerable thickness. It appears that such seats were meant for anchorites only, for, in the Ajanta paintings of the later period also similar blocks of wood are shown as the seats of hermits. We learn from I-Tsing that such blocks of wood were commonly used by monks, more especially by the junior members of the Buddhist Order, at the time of taking meals.⁴ It should be noted that such blocks of wood are presently used in South India at the time of taking food.

ĀSANDI

In the garden scene⁵ some couples in amorous mood are shown sitting on small cots which are not long enough to be classed as beds but which can be described as *divans* on which one can relax and not sleep. They have a rectangular top mounted on four stout legs. They can be identified as *āsandi*. Some of the excellent illustrations of *āsandi* occur in the Amaravati carvings.⁶

Arms & Armour

Arms of different varieties are depicted in the reliefs. There is, however, not much variety among each type of arm. They are grouped below into two classes viz. the offensive and the defensive arms.

(1) Pl. XIX,c.

(2) Pl. XIII

(3) Pl. XXVII

(4) J. Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as practised in India and the Malay Archipelago* (A.D. 671-695) by I-Tsing, P. 22. (Oxford, 1898)

(5) Pl. LXIV, C.

(6) Sivaramamurti, *op. cit.*, Pl. XII, 16.

OFFENSIVE ARMS

Bow

Of the offensive arms of our ancient past the most important is the bow, which remained the commonest arm throughout the early period. It is the weapon *par excellence* which gives its name to the Indian Military Science, the *Dhanurveda*. The antiquity of bow can be stretched back to the third millennium B. C. for the finds of bronze arrowheads at Harappa and Mohenjodaro imply the use of bow, specimens of which, however, have not survived. From the Vedic period onwards the bow became a weapon of supreme importance as is attested to by literary references which are too many to detail.

The bows at Sanchi are of two varieties. The first is a single-curved bow¹, the other has a double-curved stave (Fig. 46). The latter, in all probability, appears to be composite bow having its stave composed of two curved pieces joined together by a central piece.

This type of composite bow is of rare occurrence in early Indian art. It becomes common later and is depicted on the "Lion-slayer" and the "Tiger-slayer" types of coins of Samudragupta². The composite bow is said to have been the invention of the Scythians³ who probably introduced it in India before the beginning of the Christian era and on account of its strength and power of hurling arrows it appears to have been used by Indians as well. Thus its occurrence at Sanchi need not surprises us.

The composite bow seems to have taken considerable time to be commonly adopted by Indians. Its illustrations in Indian art show that it became common during and after the Gupta period. This is also supported by literary references to it which are all decidedly of a later date. Thus two passages in the *Agni-Purāṇa* refer to the composite bow. One of it says that it might be made of wood and bone conjointly. In the other we are told that

(1) Pl. XV

(2) Vidya Prakash, "Some Aspects of Material Life on Gupta Coins," *JNSI*, Vol. XXIII, p. 284.

(3) PIK. Gode, "Mounted Bow on Indian Battle-fields," *BDCRI*, Vol. VIII, 1947, p. 34.

its middle part should be joined with a spare piece of wood¹-while the *Sisupālavadha*² mentions of a piece of metal fixed in the middle of the stave.

ARROWS

Arrows occur in a number of panels but are seen very indistinctly and it is therefore difficult to study their shapes as well as other details. From the literary references it appears that the shaft of the arrow-heads was made of reed, cane or bamboo and sometimes of iron as well. Those of reed are referred to as *Vaiyavah* and the iron ones as *nārāchā* in the *Mahābhārata*.³ The epic, though rarely, also mentions shafts of bone⁴. It further details the birds the feathers of which were fastened to the lower end of the arrow with a view to stabilizing its flight.⁵

Another variety of the arrow has a sharp crescentic head⁶ (Fig. 47). It is possibly the *ardha-chandra* type of arrow referred to in the *Dhanurveda*.⁷

The length of the arrows has been very carefully noted by the classical writers. Thus according to Strabo⁸ it was three cubits long while Rufus⁹ records that the arrows used in hunting were two cubits long.

Quivers

Quiver is also represented. It is a cylindrical container with tapering sides. It is usually fastened at the back by means of straps in such a way that its mouth projects above the right shoulder so as to facilitate the drawing of arrows by the right hand.

Quiver is generally referred to as *tūṇa* or *tūṇīra*¹⁰ and was usually made of leather. Actual finds of quiver are extremely rare and

(1) See P. C. Chakravarti, *Art of War in Ancient India*, pp. 53 ff. (Dacca, 1941).

(2) XX, 12.

(3) Hopkins, "Position of Ruling Caster India", *JASOS*, Vol. XIII, 1903, p. 275.

(4) *Ibid.*

(5) *Ibid.*, p. 276.

(6) Fergusson, *op. cit.*, Pl. XXXVI, Fig. 2.

(7) See Chakravarti, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

(8) Majumdar, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

(9) *Ibid.* p. 105.

(10) Amara, p. 193.

the one found at Nalanda, which is referable to the 7th-8th cent. A. D. is of bronze. Quivers of metal,¹ however, would have been difficult to carry.

Sword

The sword was possibly the commonest offensive weapon, next only to the bow, in ancient India. But its representations at Sanchi are very few. The sword of a *yakṣa*, from the shape of the scabbard, appears to be quite broad and long as well (Fig. 48). Its hilt is not seen. It is a sheathed sword and the knotted thongs are seen crossing over the scabbard. From the curved tip it appears to be of the cutting type and can therefore be identified as the *mandālāgra* variety of the *Arthaśāstra*.² It is possibly to this type of sword to which Arrian refers when he says that some Indians wear "a sword which is broad in the blade but not longer than three cubits, and this, when they engage in close fights (which they do with reluctance), they wield with both hands to fetch down a lustier blow".³

Such broad swords appear to be common in the early period for the sword of Kanishka, together with its thonged scabbard,⁴ is strikingly similar to the Sanchi specimen. In the later period the swords become elongated and narrower and usually have a pointed tip as the numerous illustrations in the later group of Ajanta paintings would show. Thus the "cutting type" of the early period is replaced by the "thrusting type" in the later period.

The sword has a high antiquity in India. It is, however, conspicuously absent at the Harappan sites. The earliest swords that have been found in the country are referable to the end of the second or the beginning of the first millennium B. C.⁵ They become a common weapon in the later period and HOPKINS observes from the internal evidence of the *Mahābhārata* that "the epic stage represents a transition period when the bow is yielding the chief position to the sword."⁶

(1) *ARASI*, 1930-34, Pt. II.

(2) p. 111.

(3) Majumdar, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

(4) Vogel, *op. cit.*, Pl. I.

(5) B. B. Lal, "Protohistoric Investigation," *AI*, No. 9, pp. 91-92.

(6) *op. cit.*, *JAOS*, Vol. XIII, p. 285.

Scabbard (Fig. 48)

The sword referred to above is seen in a sheath and is suspended from the waist-band. Sheaths are said to have been made of leather such as cow-hide, rhinohide and tiger-skin or of silk¹ and gold² as well.

Spear

There are two excellent illustrations of spears. One of them has an elongated, triangular spear-head³ hafted in a strong wooden pole. The other has a broad, curved blade with barbed ends and a broader, fluted base. (Fig. 49). It is very similar to an early Ajanta specimen,⁴ which, however, has sharp flutings. It is possible the *kunta* type of weapon which, according to Kautilya, has edges like a ploughshare.⁵

The spear was a fairly common weapon in the ancient warfare. Every foot soldier was armed with a spear and a shield while the bow and the sword were the weapons of those in the higher ranks.

The spear killed one man at a time and is therefore referred to as *ekaghni* as against *sataghni* which killed many.⁶ It is usually mentioned as *sakti* and its head was mostly of iron (*āyasi sakti*) but sometimes of gold or plaited with gold and adorned with bells.⁷ The spear was oiled for the sake of smoothness.⁸

Trident

A demon of Mara's army is shown weilding a trident mounted on a strong pole (Fig. 50).

Dart

A very curious weapon is shown weilded by a demon of Mara. It has a grip in the middle and on either sides are pointed

(1) Mitra, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 139.

(2) Hopkins, *op. cit.*, *JAOS*, Vol XIII, p. 286.

(3) Pl. LXVI.

(4) Yasdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. III, Pl. XXIX, a.

(5) *Arthashastra*, p. 111.

(6) Hopkins, *op. cit.*, *JAOS*, Vol. XIII, p. 288.

(7) *Ibid.*

(8) *Ibid.*

ends. In character and design it is not far removed from the *vajra* of Indra; the latter, however, is three-pronged. The Sanchi specimen appears to be a dart (*karpana*) (Fig. 51).

Mace

Mace is one of the deadliest weapons used for crushing the enemy. It is one of the primitive weapons and, being the heaviest, was handled by only a few who possessed the necessary physical strength to do so. And that is why it is usually associated with such epic heroes as Bhima and Balarama who are known for their tremendous physical power.

The mace seen in the reliefs consists of a short, thick handle with a tapering sides having a knobbed and bulbous head.¹

Mace is said to be made of iron (*ayomayī* or *āyasi*) and was plated with gold and bejewelled.² Arrian records that mace was the chief weapon on the Sibi tribe.³ It also occurs on the "Chakravikrama" coin-type of Chandragupta II.⁴

Mace was primarily meant for crushing the opponent. Though it is a weapon of non-missile class, it could be hurled as well.

Cudgel (*mudgala*)

The cudgel shown in the reliefs⁵ is only a short rod, probably wooden, with its sides tapering into a broad, curved end.

DEFENSIVE WEAPONS

Of the defensive weapons the most important and the commonest is the shield. The Sanchi shields are of two types viz. (a) triangular and (2) oblong.

The triangular shields have rounded corners and are decorated with a central, vertical band and two oblique bands issuing from the upper corners, all the three crossing each other in

(1) Pl. XV.

(2) Hopkins, *op. cit.*, JAOS, Vol. XIII, p. 290.

(3) Majumadar, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

(4) Vidya Prakash, *op. cit.*, JNSI, Vol. XXIII, Pl. VIII, No. 8.

(5) Pl. XVIII, a.

the middle. (Fig. 52). Similar triangular shields also occur in the early paintings at Ajanta.¹

The triangular shield can be identified as the *hastikarṇa* variety of the *Arthaśāstra*² and as the very name implies, they approximate in shape an elephant's ear.

The other variety of shields is oblong in shape and has a rounded top. (Fig. 53). They are decorated with cross bands resembling the "Union Jack" device. It can be identified as the *kavaṭa* of the *Arthaśāstra*.³

The shield must have been provided with a handle probably a strap handle at the back. Further, from the mere illustrations in the reliefs and for want of actual specimens it is difficult to say anything regarding their material. Kautilya enumerates wood, cane, bamboo and leather.⁴ Arrian notes that they were of ox-hide⁵ which is confirmed from by the evidence from the epics.⁶ The very name *charma* for shields is indicative of their being made of leather.

Helmet (*sīrastrāṇa*)

A mahut is shown wearing a helmet crowned by a knob. (Fig. 54).

Musical Instruments

Indian music has one of the longest and most distinguished histories of any tradition in the world. Intimately involved as it is with the Hindu religion, its origin centres round the chanting of the *Rgveda* and the *Sāmaveda*, the oldest liturgy in the world. The theoretical knowledge of Indian music is still preserved in a number of manuscripts and is handed down from generation to generation in pupillary succession. But our knowledge of our ancient musical instruments is far from satisfactory and hence the importance of their plastic representations.

Traditionally the ancient musical instruments have usually been classified under the following four categories.

(1) Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. III, Pl. XXIX, a.

(2) p. 112.

(3) *Ibid.*

(4) *Ibid.*

(5) Majumdar, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

(6) Hopkins, *op. cit.*, JAOS, Vol. XIII, p. 257.

1. *Tata*, that which includes all stringed instruments.
2. *Ānaddha* or the percussion instruments which are struck like drums etc.
3. *Suṣira* includes all wind instruments which are to be blown like flute, conch etc.
4. *Ghana* the solid ones including cymbal-like resonators.

The musical instruments depicted in the Sanchi reliefs can be conveniently classified in the groups mentioned above.

STRINGED INSTRUMENTS (*tata*)

Of this variety there is only a *vīṇā*. It was perhaps the most favourite instrument in India in ancient times and it occupies a very important position in the history of Indian music. It has a high antiquity in India and referred to even in the Vedic literature¹ and the later Indian literature abounds in references to it.

The type of *vīṇā* that occurs in the Sanchi reliefs (Pl. VII) is the harp-shaped or bow-shaped *vīṇā* which consists of a curved board (*ambhaya*)² with strings stretched over it. The curved board has a tapering top (*vīṇā-danda*), sometimes hooked, to which the strings are tied. The lower part broadens out and has a roundish end. The *vīṇā* is shown held by the player in her lap with the tail-piece in her left hand while the chords are being plucked by her right hand, probably by means of a plectrum (*kona*). The specimen in question has seven strings and may therefore be the *sapta-tantri-vīṇā* which was also known as the *parivādini* or the *vipañchi vīṇā*.³

This type of *vīṇā* was evolved on the principle of bow and resonator and from its plastic representations appears to be the most ancient Indian *vīṇā*. It occurs even in the prehistoric rock paintings in Central India,⁴ the date of which is, however, controversial. But it all the more supports SIVARAMAMURTI's contention that this type of *vīṇā*, in the form of a bow, which was known as *dhanuryantra* or a musical instrument fashioned after the hunting bow having the

(1) For literary references to *Vīṇa* see B. H. Kapadia, "Vīṇa in Sanskrit Literature," *Po*, Vol. XXVI, 1961, pp. 1 ff.

(2) See Coomaraswamy, "Parts of *Vīṇa*," *JAOS*, Vol. 50, 1930, p. 26.

(3) *Amara*, p. 48.

(4) D. H. Gordon, *Prehistoric Background of Indian Culture*, p. 106. Fig. 14, 2.

strings of gut, can be regarded as the forerunner of all the musical instruments in the world.¹

The representations of the *vīṇā* of this type are very common in the early Indian art at Bharahut,² Pitalkhora,³ Amaravati,⁴ Nagarjunikonda⁵ and Mathura⁶ and is also to be noticed in the Gandhara art but in a slightly different form.⁷ It continues in the 4th-5th Centuries A.D. and occurs on the *Vīṇā-vādana* coin types of Samudragupta⁸ who is praised in his Allahabad *prasasti* for his skill in music.⁹ An excellent illustration of this type of *vīṇā* is to be found in a terracotta figurine of the Gupta period from Rupar.¹⁰ It becomes scarce in the later period when it is replaced by the guitar-shaped *vīṇā*. However, it is interesting to note that this bow-shaped *vīṇā* which altogether disappears from the country of its origin after 6th cent. A. D., travels far beyond the frontiers of the country even in the early period. It occurs in a 1st cent. A. D. fresco in Samarkand and in a stone frieze from Airtem in Uzbekistan.¹¹ Still later it travels to south-east Asia and in Burma it exists today in a very elegant form with silk strings and tassels and gilded decoration and is known as *saun*¹² while some of the Afghan tribes on the northwestern frontiers of the sub-continent still use such a bow harp which, however, is primitive.

PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS (*ānaddha*)

The percussion instruments include a large number of drums varying in their sound and size. The *mṛdaṅga*, the classical drum of India, literally means the "clay body" and it should be noted that large earthen pots are even today used by Indian drummers.

(1) Sivaramamurti, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-45.

(2) Barua, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, Pl. XXXIX.

(3) Swami Prajnananda, "Saptatantri *Vīṇā* in the Sculptures of the Buddhist Cave at Ellora Pitalkhora," *Roop-Lekha*, Vol. XXIII, 1961, p. 34 ff.

(4) Sivaramamurti, *op. cit.*, Pl. XIII, 3 & 7.

(5) Naik, *op. cit.*, *BDCRI*, Vol. II, p. 295, Fig. 6-7.

(6) Vogel, *op. cit.*, Pl. XLVI, b.

(7) Marshall, *op. cit.*, Fig. 118.

(8) A. S. Altekar, *Catalogue of Gupta Gold Coins in the Bayana Hoard*, Pl. Vi, Nos. 3-8.

(9) CII, Vol. III, p. 14-15.

(10) Sharma, *op. cit.*, *Lalit Kala*, Nos. 1-2, Fig. 24.

(11) Jean Jenkins, "Musical Instruments from Central Asia," *Leader*, daily, Aug. 14, 1960.

(12) A beautiful specimen of this is in the Madras Museum, See P. Sambamoorthy, *Catalogue of the Musical Instruments in the Madras Government Museum*, p. 15, Pl. X, Fig. 1.

The drum (*mrdaṅga*) is said to be the most ancient musical instrument in India. The god Brahma is said to have invented it to serve as an accompaniment to the dance of Śiva after his victory over the demon Tripurāsura and the god Ganeśa was the first to play this instrument.¹ The *mrdaṅga* is used presently for chamber music and is an indispensable accompaniment to both vocal and instrumental music. The *mrdaṅga*-playing is a great art in India the like of which is not to be found in any other country. The *mrdaṅga* solos are a real treat and it requires years of practice to attain proficiency in playing it.

A good number of drums are illustrated at Sanchi and their following classification is based on the position in which they are held for playing.

Concert Drums

In a scene showing a musical concert² (Pl. VII) three types of drums are seen. One of them is held by a playing it in her lap. Only one of its round face is visible. It can be identified as the *aṅkyā* type of drum.³

Another drum, smaller than the preceding one, is held by the drummer under her arm and may therefore be the *ālingya*⁴ drum. From the illustrations of *ālingya* drums elsewhere it appears that it was similar to an hour-glass in shape, and thus facilitating handling it under the arm.

The third type of the concert drums has an elongated body slightly bulging in the middle. Only its upper face was used for playing. The vertical braces, probably leathern, are seen passing through the holes in the leathern face, but no barrel-shaped blocks of wood are inserted in the braces for tightening as is done today.

Though it is not seen clearly in the reliefs, it would not be wrong to say that this type of drum was played in pairs and one of them was taller than the other. Further it was usually played with curved sticks (*kona*). This pair of elongated drums can be identified as the *ūrdhvaka* drums.⁵

(1) Sambamoorthy, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23.

(2) Pl. XXIX.

(3) *Amara*, p. 29.

(5) *Ama ra*, p. 29.

(4) *Ibid.*

The concert drums described above were probably made of hollowed blocks of wood and the faces, as is today, of leather, possibly the calf leather. The braces, also of leather, have also been provided for tuning the instrument.

The *mṛdaṅgas* that are presently used have a small circular fixture of black paster on their face. This paste is a mixture of manganese dust, boiled rice and tamarind juice or a composition of iron filings and rice paste. The paste is very thick in the centre and thickens out on the periphery. It is this black paste which gives the fine, characteristic tone to the *mṛdaṅga*.

The other face is without the mark today. To this is applied the rice paste at the commencement of the concert. The tone, though sweet after a fresh application of paste, becomes coarse after the diminution of that substance.

Yet another variety of drums (Pl. VIII), which are comparatively smaller than those already described. They are small, cylindrical in shape, with braces tied to them. They are hung in neck by means of a small rope.¹ These are probably refined varieties of drums, producing sweet sound and may probably be of the *mūraja* type referred to by Kalidasa.

WAR DRUMS (*dundubhi*)

There are a couple of representations of huge drums which have been shown used in temples and war. One of them is a huge, barrel-shaped drum with braces stretched from sides.² A strong club, probably wooden, is shown used for beating it. (Fig. 55). It is seen in a shrine.

Another kettle-drum³ is sub-spherical in shape and is decorated with curved bands containing beaded ornamentation (Fig. 56). It resembles the *nagara* which is used today in temples and festivals.

Another percussion instrument is a disc-shaped drum⁴ (Fig. 57) which is exactly similar to the *daph* used today in Maharashtra.

(1) Pl. LXL.

(2) Pl. XXXIV.

(3) Pl. LXI.

(4) Pl. XL.

WIND INSTRUMENTS (*susira*)

Of the *susira* variety conch, clute and trumpet occur.

CONCH (*saṅkha*)

Conch is one of the most ancient wind instruments which, though used in festivals and temples today, was used in wars in ancient times. It was blown before and after the battle every day in the battle-field.¹

FLUTE (*venū*)

The flutes shown in the reliefs² are tubular and probably have the mouth-hole (*mukha-randhra*) pierced very near the upper end which must have been closed. The finger-holes (*tāra-randhra*) which must have been in alignment with the mouth-hole are not seen in the reliefs.

Another very interesting instrument of this class is a composite flute³ which consists of two flutes joined together at one end from which it is blown (Pl. VIII). This is possibly the only instrument of its kind which is represented in the whole range of Indian art and is without a parallel in the country. In this connection it is interesting to know that similar composite flute, known as *syrrinx* or *Pan-pipe* was a folk instrument for thousands of years in Greece where it is said to be in use since Homeric times.⁴ The Chinese too used a very similar instrument from a very early period. The Greek *syrrinx* or the *Pan-pipe* consisted of a single tube, either open at both ends or close at one end. The air was directed against the edge of upper opening. Two or more tubes of varying lengths or widths were usually combined to form compound Pan-pipes. They were often graduated in length to form a scale.

It should also be noted that the composite flute is depicted in the reliefs as being played by a person who, from his dress, appears to be a foreigner. This would show that the instrument was introduced by the Greeks in India. However, it does not appear to have been found favour with Indians as it is absent in the later

(1) *Ibid.*

(2) *Ibid.*

(3) Pl. XXXVI.

(4) *Musical Instruments*, pp. 57-58. (London, Horniman Museum, 1958.)

period. Yet, surprisingly enough, it is in use in the country, particularly in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and northern parts of Madhya Pradesh where the cow-boys, especially those belonging to the *Ahir* community, play on it. and the instrument is known as *algojyā*.

TRUMPETS (*tūrya*)

Some persons, apparently Sakas, are shown blowing trumpets (Pl. VIII) which have their sides tapering towards a thin, curved mouth while they broaden out towards the upper end which shaped like a swan's head.

SOLID INSTRUMENTS (*ghana*)

The only *ghana* instrument that occurs in the reliefs is a pair of small bars, possibly of iron. They were obviously used for keeping time as is done today with the help of triangles.

Conveyances (*yāna*)

Though the representations of modes of conveyance are few and far between, they no doubt give us a fairly good idea of the means of communications which existed in those days. They can be classified into two categories viz. those for land transport and the other for water transport. In the former category can be included the animals such as horse and elephant as also the wheeled vehicles like chariots and carts. Conveyances such as boats are included in the other class i. e. water transport.

LAND TRANSPORT

Horse

Of all the animals used as a mode of transport, horse is the most important. It is now almost an established fact that the beast was known to the Harappans¹. But there is no evidence whatsoever to show that it was employed for some definite purpose in the urban economy. In the later period we find innumerable references to horse in the Vedic literature and the Vedic Aryans used it mostly for the purpose of drawing chariots. Since then it becomes one of the favourite animals.

(1) A. D. Pusalkar, "Horse in Proto-Historic Period," *BV*, Vol. XX-XXI, 1960-61, pp. 237-41.

The representations at Sanchi show that the animal was mostly used for drawing chariot¹ and very rarely for riding as well². The horses have usually been shown with rich trappings. Of these, the saddle is only a bordered piece of cloth, probably stuffed. It is possibly secured on the belly by means of ropes. The bridle consists of thin straps probably of leather, and included a forehead band, cheek-pieces and nose-band. The reins consist of a double strap (Fig. 58).

It should be noted that bits are seen distinctly in the reliefs. Arrian's statement that horse-bits were absent in India at the time of his visit gave rise to a controversy. Fortunately the controversy has been laid to rest by the testimony of another, yet greater, authority, Megasthenes, who mentions horse-bits³. But FERGUSSON, relying on Arrian's statement, credited the Hellenistic Greeks with the introduction of horse-bits into India and quoted in support of his contention the similarity between the words for snaffle in Sanskrit (*khalīna*) and Greek (*xarivos*) and their presence in the Sanchi reliefs.

Among the trappings should also be included the breast-band and another similar band at the back passing from below the tail.⁴ These bands are sometimes ornamented with rosette-shaped bosses.⁵ The head of the beast was adorned a fly-whisk. It may also be mentioned here that stirrups are conspicuously absent.

From the representations of horses they seem to be of excellent breed. They were probably imported from Central Asia and Persia for the people of the Kamboja country, we are told, presented Yudhisthira with horses of finest breed from their country⁶.

The reliefs show that horse was used in processions but it was more important in war.

Elephant

Elephant was one of the symbol of sovereignty and was therefore a most favourite animal of kings in ancient times. It was generally used in royal processions and it formed an important arm

(1) Pls. LXI & LXII. (2) Pls. XV, & LXI.

(3) See Mitra, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 335-36.

(4) Pl. XXIII, a.

(5) Moti Chandra, *Geographical and Economic Studies in the Mahabharata-Upanayana Parva*, p. 35. (Lucknow, 1945).

of the royal army. It was richly decorated with elaborate trappings. (Fig. 59).

The housing for elephants, like that for the saddle of the horse, consisted of a thick padding covered with a piece of carpeting or embroidered cloth secured by strong ropes.

The forehead and the neck of the royal elephant were lavishly ornamented. A number of bead-strings together with spacers at regular intervals adorned the neck while on the forehead was an ornamental band decorated with rosette-shaped bosses and adorned with crescentic pendants alternating with what looks like pearl tassels. In ancient Greece such crescentic pendants were used for decorating horses¹. Such pendants are also found on the necks of horses depicted in the later group of Ajanta paintings². The whole ornamental band, together with pendants has been referred to as *nakṣatramālā* by Bana³. Very similar crescentic pendants which also adorned the horses have been identified by Dr. AGRAVALA as the *lavanya-kalāyī* ornament⁴.

From the representations it appears that elephant was used in war and for state occasions. It is needless to mention that it formed a very strong wing of the ancient Indian army. Arrian makes a special mention of the elephants in Porus' army⁵ while Kautilya prescribes the duties of the officer in charge of palace stables⁶. Even after the formation of regular cavalry divisions in the army in the later period, the elephant continued to enjoy the same position. This may of course be due to the fact that there was a good supply of excellent breeds within the country itself.

Bullock-cart

The bullock-cart is perhaps the oldest and commonest wheeled vehicle in India. An excellent example of a cart is depicted in one of the reliefs⁷. It consists of a box-like frame

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- (1) F. H. Marshall, *Catalogue of Jewellery in the British Museum Greek, Etruscan and Roman*, p. xlvi. (London, 1911)
- (2) Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. IV, Pl. L, c.
- (3) V. S. Agrawala. *Kādambarī*, pp. 97-98. (Varanasi, 1958).
- (4) "A Note on *Lavanya-kalāyī*", IC, Vol. XII, 19 6, pp. 232-35.
- (5) Majumdar, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
- (6) *Arthaśāstra*, pp. 151-55.
- (7) Pl. XIX.

mounted on wheels having lotus petal-shaped spokes. It is covered with a vaulted roof, of bamboo work, for protecting the occupants from the sun and rain (Fig. 60). Very similar roofed carts can be seen even today in Indian villages.

It appears that the roofed carts were intended for joy-rides not for transporting materials. The *Mrchchhakaṭika* refers to such roofed (*apavārita*) carts.

Chariots

There are a few excellent representations of chariots which, however, do not differ from each other in their shape and design. But two varieties can be distinguished viz. those with two horses¹ (Fig. 60) and others with four horses². The former are comparatively smaller than the latter; the shape, however, is the same.

The body of the chariot is mounted on a set of two wheels lotus petal shaped spokes. Above the wheels on either side, rises a curved projection while a similar but longer one is seen on the front and all the three projections undoubtedly serve as guard. The upper margin of the guard is decorated with a deeply incised chevron band. The small rectangular marks on the guard may probably be the clamps holding the wooden planks together.

The pole of the car (*ratha-iṣa*)³ is fastened to the body of the car and to the double yoke (*yuga*) that crosses it and rests in turn on the necks of the steeds. The fastenings of the yoke (*charabandha, rathabandha*) and the pole, appear to be of leather⁴.

The Sanchi chariot appears essentially to be a war chariot and seats only the warrior, usually the king, along with the charioteer. Such chariots are very rare in early Indian art and the only parallel that I could trace is in the chariot of the sun at Bodhgaya which is ascribed to the early Kushana period⁵.

Chariot, in any form was not known to the Harappans. It is difficult to conceive precisely the shape of the Vedic chariot, but

(1) Pl. XV.

(2) Pl. XXIII, Pl. LXI.

(3) The different parts of chariot detailed in the *Mahābhārata* have been given by Hopkins. See *op. cit., JAOS*, Vol. XIII, pp. 235 ff.

(4) *Ibid.* p. 240.

(5) Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, Pl. XVII, Fig. 61. (London, 1927).

if the relationship between the vedic Aryans and the Hittites is accepted, we can say that it could not have been very different from the Sanchi specimen. For, a very early illustration of a Hittite chariot depicted in the temple of Rameses III at Thebes² bears a very close resemblance to the Sanchi specimen. This type of chariot is later replaced by an elaborate one, with a cubicle body bearing lavish ornamentations, and its finest representation is to be found in the later group of Ajanta paintings.³

WATER TRANSPORT

Boats

A boat is depicted in a panel showing the "Miracle of the Buddha."⁴ It has a high, pointed prow but the stern is not prominent. The rectangular marks on their exterior of its body probably represent iron clamps, meant for holding the planks together. Thus the boat is a rude canoe, made of rough planks sewn together.

Another extremely interesting boat illustrated by FERGUSSON⁵ is a very elaborate vessel (Fig. 62). It is adorned with a prancing *vyāla-mukha* on the prow while the stern is in the shape of a fish's tail. Near the stern hangs the oar in a socket. In the middle of the boat is an exquisite pavilion supported on four pillars. It has been rightly identified by ER. R. K. MOOKERJI as the *madhyaman-dirā* type of boat mentioned in the *Yukti-kalpa-taru*⁶. Excellent illustrations of boats of this class are to be found in the later group of Ajanta paintings⁷ and in the Jagannath temple at Puri.⁸ But it is noteworthy that a boat with a modest hut in the middle is depicted on a seal from Mohenjo-daro. The hut may not be a shrine as MACKAY⁹ thinks but may be an humble structure to afford shelter from sun and rain. This would point to the survival of a very early type of boat through the millennia.

(1) R. E. Oakeshott, *The Archaeology of Weapons*, pp. 62-63, Fig. 31 (London, 1960)

(2) Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. IV, Pl. I, c.

(3) *op. cit.*, Pl. XXXI, Gig. 1.

(4) See his *History of Indian Shipping*, p. 29,

(5) Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. I, Pl.

(6) Mitra, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 293.

(7) *Further Excavations at Mohenjodaro*, pp. 30-I, Pl. XIX, No. 14.

Royal Insignia

The royal insignia is generally referred to as *parichchhada* which includes the royal paraphernalia in general and constitutes the external appendages of royalty. These include the royal throne, umbrella, a pair of whisks, a crown with a central gem, sceptre, canopy of state, golden foot-stool, flags and banners etc.¹ Of these the crown is not to be found at Sanchi obviously because even Kings are shown wearing turbans and gem-set crowns have not yet come into being. The royal emblems enumerated above have been detailed by Kalidasa who flourished in the 5th Cent. A.D.

Of the royal emblems occurring in the reliefs, thrones and foot-stools have already been dealt with under furniture while the remaining are as follows :

Umbrella (*chhatra*)

Chhatra was perhaps the most important symbol of sovereignty, and together with fly-whisk (*chāmara*) was held in greater estimation than even the crown. Hence the sovereign is *par excellence chhatrapati* or the "Lord of the Umbrella".

The umbrellas depicted in the reliefs do not differ each other so far as the shape is concerned. They have a rather flattish top with thickened brim, mounted on a slender rod, probably wooden, by means of a cup-shaped neck. The lower ends of the spokes supporting the top can be clearly seen in the *Viśvantara Jātaka*.² It is adorned with a cluster of pearl-string pendants and is strikingly similar to that in the later group of Ajanta paintings.³ (Fig. 63)

Another similar *chhatra* is seen with a banner attached to neck.⁴ Parasols with banners tied to them are to be noticed on the *chhatra* type of Gupta coins.⁵

Regarding materials used in the making of the royal umbrella, the literature of the later period furnishes some interesting information. Varahamihira, who deals with it exhaustively,

(1) See B. S. Upadhyaya, *India in Kalidasa*, pp. 77 ff. (Allahabad 1947).

(2) Pl. XXIII, a.

(3) Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. I, Pl. XVI.

(4) Pl. XV.

(5) Vidya Prakash, *op. cit.*, *JNSI*, Vol. XXIII, p. 281.

prescribes that the white umbrella of the following description brings all round happiness and victory to a king. "It is to be made of feathers of swans, cocks, peacocks or cranes; it must be covered all round with a fresh white silken cloth. It must be adorned by pearls and have garlands of pearls all around from its edges; its handle is made of crystal; the rod of a single wood is 6 cubits in length, covered with pure gold and 7 or 9 joints. The extent or diameter is 6 cubits. It should be well-knit all over and adorned with gems¹".

Fly-whisks (*chāmara*)

A pair of fly-whisks was reckoned next in importance to the *chhatra* as a royal emblem and along with the latter would, on no account, be given away (*adeya-trayam*²). The specimen consists of a slender handle on which is set the whisk. The whisk was usually made of Yak-tails imported from the sub-Himalayan regions. The handle was usually made of wood and is said to measure "one cubit (with the fist closed)³". Fly-whisks, black and white in colour, were presented to Harsha by Bhāskaravarman.⁴

Banners (*dhvaja*)

The banner is of extreme importance in a battle as the rallying point for soldiers in action or for the assemblage of troops who have a feeling of patriotic devotion to it. It is cherished as a military honour and the standard of a general is the upholder of the army.

The commonest type of banner⁵ that occurs in the Sanchi reliefs consists of a *triratna* standard from below which is suspended an oblong banner bearing stripes similar to those on the "Union Jack". Sometimes clusters of pearl strings are suspended from the top⁶. (Fig. 64).

The banners, however, may not be national but rather individual as is suggested by literary references to them which men-

(1) *Bṛhatśāṁhitā*, Ed. by V. Subrahmanyam Sastri, Vol. III, Ch. 72, pp. 589 ff. Bangalore, (1947)

(2) *Raghu*, III, 16.

(3) *Bṛhatśāṁhitā*, Vol. II, Ch. 72, p. 588.

(4) Agrawala, "Bhāskaravarman's Presents, to Harṣa, *JOI*, Vol. X, 1960, p. 105.

(5) Pl. XLII.

(6) Pls. XL & LXIX.

tion of individual standards by symbols which were those of animals or birds, such the "ape-standard" (*vānara-dhvaja*) of Arjuna.¹

Sceptre

The sceptre was an important emblem which was used on state occasions. The panels showing various kings bringing offerings to the *Bo* tree or the stupas depict their sceptres as well. One such sceptre has a disc-shaped, top probably with a gem in the centre and a cluster of pearl strings from it. Another one is similar the preceding specimen, but has in addition a triratna at the top.² (Fig. 65).

EPILOGUE

The foregoing account of the cultural pattern that is depicted in the Sanchi reliefs shows how important they are in the reconstruction of the life of the people during the second half of the 1st Century B. C. They precisely illustrate the life of a generation or two and therefore present us the panoramic pattern of culture during that particular period.

The entire wealth of cultural equipment in the reliefs shows that the middle of the 1st Century B. C. was a formative period in Indian history. People enjoyed prosperity; for, it is only an affluent society which makes the creation of such edifices as that at Sanchi possible. It can therefore safely be presumed that the economic prosperity, coupled with considerable political peace created a flourishing society which was prepared to assimilate new trends as also to develop the older ones. Hence we notice at Sanchi many new items of cultural equipment which later became the raging fashion of the day during the Gupta-Vakataka period. Thus we know that the commonest mode of wearing *dhoti* during the Gupta period was simply to wind it round the loins without the front pleats. This mode, as already noticed, has come into vogue in the early Satavahana period as our illustrations would show (Fig. 10). Again, so far as coiffure is concerned, the forehead curls and the bands, so common in the Gupta period, also make their appearance at Sanchi. The dainty tiaras and the elaborately

(1) Hopkins, *op. cit.*, JAOS, Vol. XIII, p. 244.

(2) Pl. XL,

bejewelled crowns of the later period are only the evolved forms of their prototypes at Sanchi.

Of the personal ornaments the most conspicuous is the *ekāvali*, a simple, single-stringed necklace. Though a raging fashion of the Golden Age, it can now be said to be an invention of the sophisticated sections of the Satavahana society. So also are the complicated *kāñthis*, inlaid with precious stones and embellished with tassels and pendants. This can better be appreciated when one compares the *kāñthi* worn by a dwarf (Fig. 36) at Sanchi and that of the famous *apsara* at Ajanta.¹

Among the domestic vessels and other household articles we know that there has not been any appreciable change during the long span of 5000 years of Indian history. The Sanchi pieces of furniture too do not show any significant development from the earlier ones; the older shapes continue. The advent of many new articles of furniture in the later period is solely due to the contact with Persians who are said to be the pioneers in the field and are credited with many new luxury articles of this class.² The musical instruments are also of the older variety out of which, of course, developed many new forms in the later period. So also is the case of arms and armour.

Thus we find a picturesque panorama of life unfolded in the reliefs. As already noted many of the new innovations of the Gupta-Vakataka period make their appearance in the early Satavahana period. However, they were not completely assimilated in the pattern of life at such an early date. But at the same time it should be noted that the early Satavahana society was not averse to receive new ideas but was, on the contrary, prone to do so. Yet it took a considerably long time to harmonize them in the pattern of culture. For, tradition dies hard, and more so in a country like India.

(1) Yazdani, *op. cit.* m. Pt. III. Pl. LXXII.

(2) Charles Singer and others, *History of Technology*, Vol. II, p. 223. (Oxford, 1954)

INDEX

- āchchhadanaka*, 25
Algojyā, 67
ālingya, 64
āmbhaṭa, 62
ānaddha, 62, 63-65
 Ananda, the royal architect, 5
 Anklets, 47-48
añkyā, 64
antariya, 17, 26
amupadīna, 27
ARCHITECTURE, 7-15
 Fortifications, 9-11
 Moat, 9
 Rampart walls, 9-10
 Tower, 10
 City Gate, 11
 Palaces, 12
 Houses, 12-13
 Huts, 13-14
 Religious architecture, 14-15
ardhachandra, 57
ardha-mukuṭas, 37
ardhoruka, 17, 19
ARMS AND ARMOUR, 55-61
 Offensive arms, 56-60
 Bow, 56-57
 Arrows, 57
 Quiver, 57-58
 Sword, 58
 Scabbard, 59
 Spear, 59
 Trident, 59
 Dart, 59-60
 Mace, 60
 Cudgel, 60
 Defensive weapons, 60-61
 Shields, 60-61
 Helmet, 61
 Arrows, 57
āsandi, 55
āṣṭamaṅgalaka hāras, 45-46
āṭṭala, 10
āṭṭalaka, 10
 Bangles, 47
 Bangles, jewelled, 47
 Banners, 73
barhabhāra-keśa, 33
 Baskets, 50
 Basket, winnowing, 51-52
 Bhavabhuti, 3
 bindi, 42
 Boats, 71
Bodhi-ghara, 14-15
 Boṭa Śrīparvata, 3
 Bow, 56-57
 Bow, simple, 56
 Bow, composite, 56-57
 Bowl, 49
 Bracelets, jewelled, 47
 Bullock-cart, 69-70
 Caps, 39
 Caskets, 51
chāmara, 73
 Chariots, 70-71
charma, 61
chhatra, 72, 73
chīna-cholaka, 21-23, 25
chogā, 21
chouki, 53
 City Gate, 11
 Cloak, 25
 Coat, full-sleeved, 21
COIFFURE AND HEAD-DRESS, 28-40
 Coiffure, 28-34
 Men, 28-33
 Women, 33
 Concert drums, 63-65
 Conch, 66
CONVEYANCES, 67-71
 Land transport, 67-71
 Horse, 67-68
 Elephant, 68-69
 Bullock-cart, 69-70
 Chariots, 70-71
 Water transport, 71
 Boats, 71

- COSTUME, 15-26
 Men, 17-21
 Foreigners, 21-23
 Women, 25-26
 Crown, 38
 Cudgel, 60
daph, 65
 Dart, 59-60
dāruhastaka, 50
 Defensive weapons, 60-61
dhanuryantra, 62
dhotī, 17, 19
dhvaja, 73
divān, 55
- DOMESTIC VESSELS AND HOUSE-HOLD OBJECTS**, 48-52
 Water jars, 48
 Bowl, 49
 Wine cup, 49
 Ladle, 49-50
 Trays, 50
 Baskets, 50
 Sacred fire receptacles, 51
 Caskets, 51
droṇa, 49
 Drums, concert, 63-65
 Drums, war, 65
dundubhi, 65
dvārakoṣṭhaka, 11
dvi-phalaka, 43
 Ear ornaments, 42-43
ekadāni, 59
ekāvali, 43-44
 Elephant, 68-69
 Flute, 66
 Fly-whisks, 73
 Foot-stools, 54
- FOOTWEAR** 27-28
 Forehead band, 29
 Forehead ornaments, 42
 Fortifications, 9-11
- FURNITURE**, 52-55
 Thrones, 52-54
 Thrones with arms, 53-54
 Foot-stools, 54
 Seats, 55
dsandi, 55
 Garment, upper, 19-21
- Gate-house, 11
ghana, 62, 76
 Girdles, 47
hastikarpa, 61
 Hand ornaments, 47
 Head-dress, 35-40
 Men, 35-39
 Indra, 38-39
 Women, 39
- Head ornaments, 41
 spray or wreath, 41
- Helmet, 61
hema-vaiakakṣyaka, 46
 Horse, 67-68
 Houses, 12-13
- HOUSE-HOLD OBJECTS**, 51-52
 Mortar and pestle, 51
 Winnowing basket, 51-52
 Saddle and quern, 52
- Huts, 13-14
 Indra, head-dress of, 38-39
jāla-vāṭapāṇa, 12
kachchha, 17, 19, 26
Kākaṇādaboṭa, 3
Kākaṇāvā, 3
Kākaṇāya, 3
kamarband, 17
kaṇṭhi, 44-45
kaphphusa, 27
kaphs, 27
karna-bhūṣaṇas, 42-43
karpaṇa-veṣṭana, 42
karpaṇa, 60
kavaṭa, 11, 60
khalīna, 68
khola, 39
kiriṭa, 38
Koṇa, 62, 64
kopari, 23
kulaha, 39
kunta, 59
kūrpāsaka, 23
kuṣa, grass, garment of, 19
 Ladle, 49-50
 Land transport, 67-71
lalāṭika, 42
 Latticed window, 12
lavapa-kalāyi, 69

- Mace, 60
madhya-mandirā, 71
Mahāvaiśa, 3
Mālatī-Mādhava, 3
mañcha seats, 55
mandalāgra, 58
mañjirā, 48
mastaka-bhūṣaṇas, 41
mekhalā, 26, 47
Milindapañha, 9
Moat, 9
moṭas, 53, 55
Mortar, 51
mṛdaṅga, 63-65
mṛḍala-kuṇḍala, 42
mudgala, 60
mukha-randhra, 66
muraja, 65
- MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**, 61-67
- Stringed instruments, 62-63
vīṇā, 62-63
 - Percussion instruments, 63-65
mṛdaṅga, 63-65
 - Concert drums, 64-65
añkyā, 64.
āliṅga, 64
Ūrdhvaka, 64
muraja, 65
War drums, 65
Wind instruments, 66
Conch, 66
Flute, 66
Trumpets, 66
Solid instruments, 67
nagārā, 65
nakṣatramālā, 69
nārāchā, 57
Neck ornaments, 43-46
nupūras, 47-48
Offensive arms, 56-60
Ornaments, see under Personal Ornaments
pāda-pīṭha, 54
Palaces, 12
Palisade, 9, 10
pañcha-phalaka, 43
Pan-pipe, 66
parikhā, 9
 - parivaddini*, 62
parṇasāla, 14
patella, 50
patrāñkura, 43
patra-pāśya, 29
 - Percussion instruments, 63-65
- PERSONAL ORNAMENTS**, 40-48
- Ornaments for head, 41
Jewelled band, 41
Ear ornaments, 42-43
Neck ornaments, 43-46
Hand ornaments, 47
Girdles, 47
Anklets, 47-48
Pestle, 51
phalaka-hāra, 43
phalaka-valaya, 47
prākāra, 9
Quern, 52
Quiver, 57-58
Rampart walls, 9-10
ratna-valaya, 47
Religious architecture, 14-15
Rome, trade with, 25
- ROYAL INSIGNIA**, 72-74
- Umbrella, 72
Fly-whisks, 73
Banners, 73
Sceptre, 74
Sacred fire receptacle, 51
Saddle, 52
sakti, 59
Sanchi, stupas at, 3
Sanchi, ancient name of, 3
Sanchi, gateways, 3-4
śankha, 66
sarpa-kuṇḍala, 43
sataghni, 59
Satakarni II, 5, 7
sauṇ, 62
Scabbard, 59
Sceptre, 74
Seats, 55
Sindhu, 15
Sindon, 15
Śimanta, 42
śimanta-chudamāṇi, 42
śimhāsana, 53

- śirastrāṇa, 61
 Solid instruments, 67
 somstāmī, 23
 Spear, 59
 Spray, 41
 Śrīparvata, 3
 stephane, 29
 Stringed instruments, 62-63
 sūppa, 52
 sūrpa, 52
 suśira, 62, 66
 svasthāna, 23, 25
 Sword, 58
 Syrinx, 66
 tāla-patra, 43
 tāra-randhra, 66
 tata, 62-63
 Thrones, 52-54
 Thrones with arms, 53-54
 Tiaras, 37-38, 39
 toga, 25
 Tower, 10
 Trays, 50
 Trident, 59
 tri-phalaka, 43
 Trumpets, 66
 tūga, 57
 Tunic, half-sleeved, 23
 tuṣīra, 58
- Turban, 35
 tūrya, 67
 Umbrella, 72, 73
 Upper garment, 19-21
 ārdhvaka, 64
 uṣṇiṣa, 35
 uttarīya, 19-21
 valkala, 19
 vālapaśya, 29
 vaikakṣyaka, 46
 vaiṇavah, 57
 veṇu, 66
 vīṇā, 62-63
 vīṇā, saptatantri, 62
 vīṇā-danḍa, 62
 vīṇā, viपāñchi, 62
 Walls, rampart, 9-10
 War drums, 65
 Water jars, 48
 Water transport, 71
 Weapons, defensive, 60-61
 Wigs, 39
 Wind instrument, 66
 Wine cup, 49
 Winnowing basket, 51-52
 Wreath, 41
 yāna, 67-71
 yaṣṭi, 43-44
-



Pl. I



Pl. II



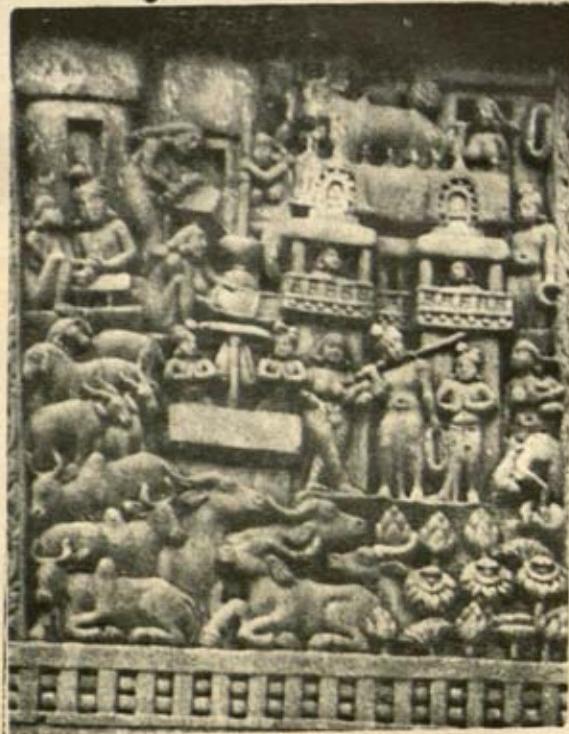
Pl. III



Pl. IV



Pl. V



Pl. VI



Pl. VII



Pl. VIII

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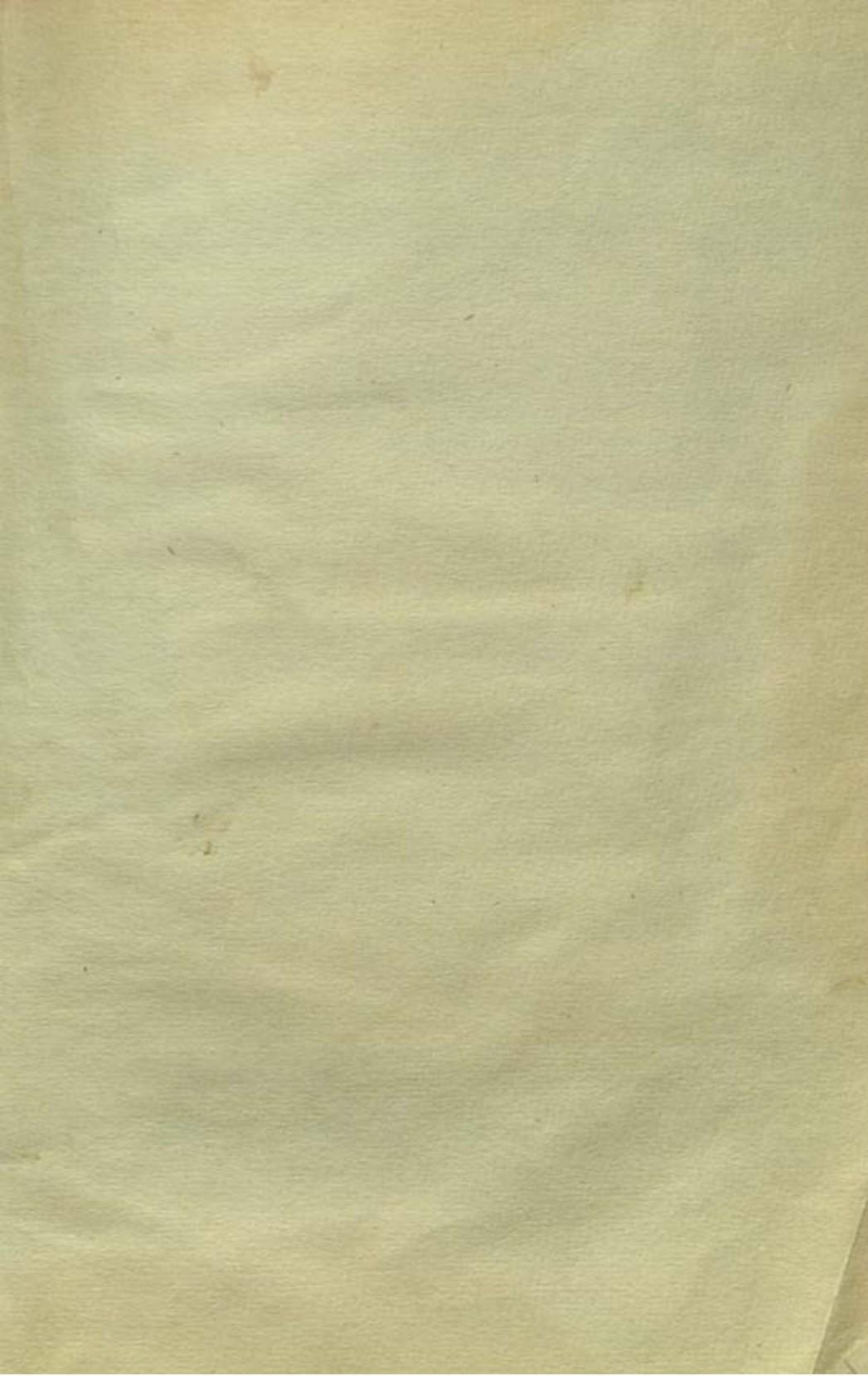
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